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[WHEELER, SAMUEL]

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PLACE:

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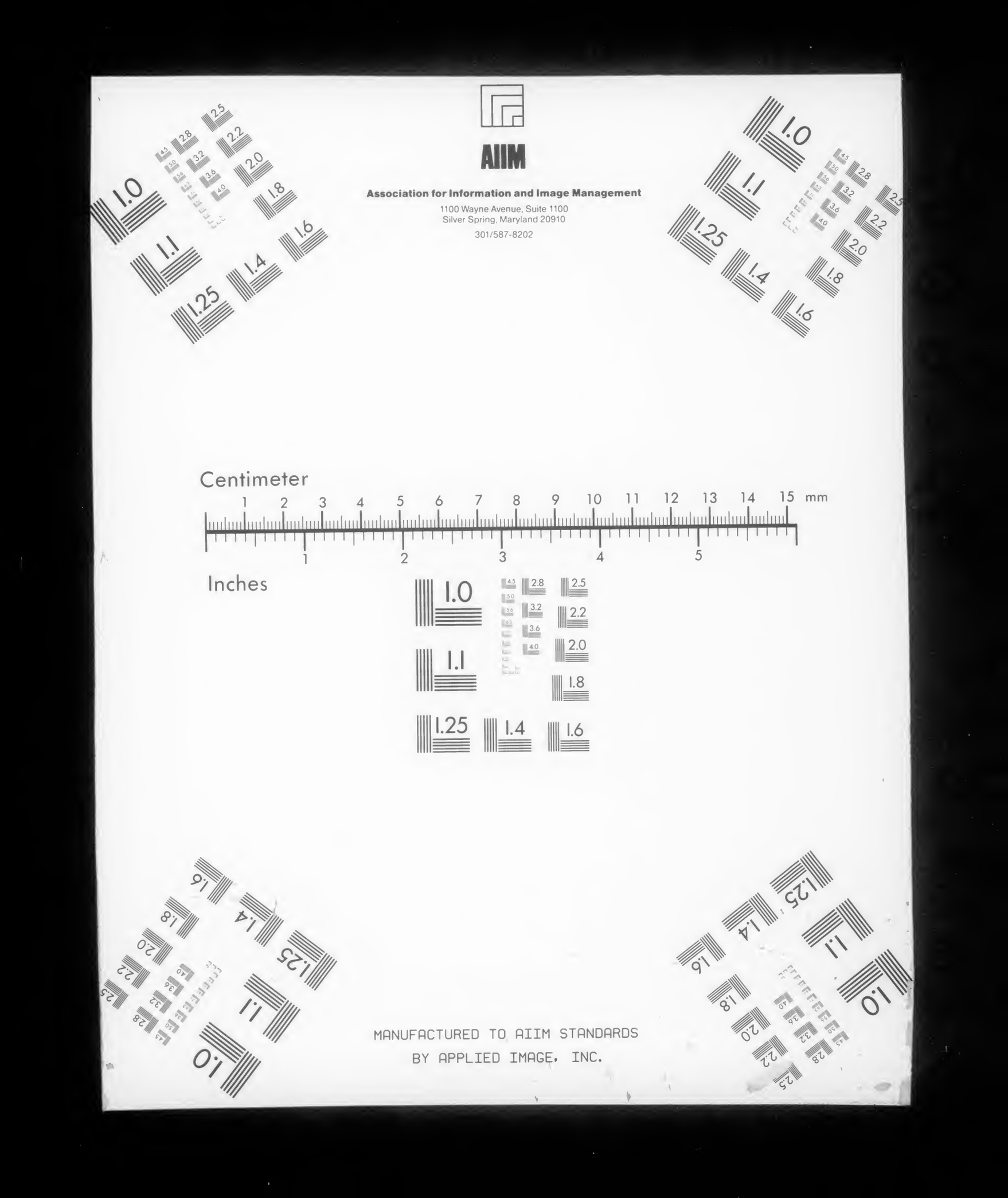
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THE

TRIANGLE.

SECOND SERIES OF NUMBERS.

BY

INVESTIGATOR.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.

William Grattan, Printer.

1821.

TO

THE PEOPLE OF NEW-YORK.

I HAD almost concluded to issue this Triangle, which the reader will perceive is the true and real Triangle, without any *address*, *advertisement*, *ad lectorem*, or *preface;* but I feared it would resemble a door without a threshold, or a building without a court-yard or portico. It is not worth while for a writer to say much about his motives in his preface. It would be like a man who was conducting you into a Museum, who should stop you at the door to tell you what was to be seen: it would be quicker work to let you in. And Johnson's saying, that a book will fix its own age and country, is generally true.

This book is not a "*Habeas corpus ad respondendum*," but rather a *Habebunt corpora ad vivendum.* I fear the lawyers will not comprehend this phrase, but the divines will, "*and that will do*," as the great Wellington said when he laid his hands on the pommel of his saddle. The Hopkinsians are a very clever set of men; all they want is to live, and "let live," They are disinterestedly benevolent. They

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wish people to know the truth, merely for the truth's sake. They, to be sure, do not wish all their necks to be made into one, and that put at the option of Nero. A Dey of Algiers once put the Spanish Ambassador into a great mortar, and shot him away at the Spanish fleet. Now, no man likes to be sent out of a city in this style. I use these little metaphors to convey my ideas: nobody believes that we have a Nero or the Dey of Algiers to contend with; but we perceive they aim at *thorough work*, and that in a summary way; we must, therefore, do a little—hence the TRIANGLE.

I.

THE TRIANGLE.

SECOND SERIES.

No. I.

I FEEL a concious pleasure in addressing the people of this noble and flourishing city—the first in the New World, and the fairest on the globe. And let it not be understood that I consider myself as environed with cross eyed selfishness; as immured in a region of gloomy prejudice; as condemned to wear the galling chains forged by iron-hearted intolerance, and riveted by the hand of sturdy ignorance. Of these imperious and unsightly demons I feel no fear; yet I revere and admire the varied talents I see conspicuous in every profession and calling, in every art and science, both liberal and mechanical—

"Where Liberty dwells there is my country."

There is not wanting liberality of sentiment, magnanimity of character; nor is this city wanting in its portion—nor is it a scanted and measured portion of intellect, adorned with the beauty of virtue, enlightened with the glory of benevolence, and fairly loosened from the gordian knot of interest and selfish consideration. And I rejoice to say, that many whose theory allows them but a cable's length of range, are, nevertheless, in heart and practice, floating at large on the main ocean of real benevolence.

Else why do I see these asylums for the sons and daughters of affliction—these grand and extensive hospitals, alms-houses, and receptacles for every class of the wretched from the keen and blighting storm of misfortune, whose extended and lofty walls might vie with the palace of a monarch? whose numerous apartments, and ample provisions, seem to promise repose and comfort to all that need? Else why do I see long ranks of poor children, of helpless orphans, enfilading the streets, to be instructed on the sabbath; and that by gentlemen, and even ladies, of rank and fortune, whose only remuneration is the pleasing consciousness of benefiting such as, by their tender and helpless years, can have no knowledge of the extent of the benefit intended?

There is a nobleness of soul, a grandeur of sentiment, a disinterestedness of heart, which soars as far above all consideration of self as the heavens are above the earth. An hour's enjoyment of that sublime pleasure is worth more than a Roman triumph—more than all the years through which ambition toils and climbs, even though it gain the summit. There is such a thing as doing good for the sake of the pleasure it brings; und he who knows not what that means is a stranger to pleasure. Let me here, for the sake of those who have never read it, repeat the story of Carazan; and which, though I cannot reach the style of its author, and may give it but imperfectly, (having no book before me,) may furnish a useful lesson to some who may read it.

Carazan was the richest merchant in Bagdat, with no children or dependants; his expenses had been small, and, with a prosperous run of business in the silk and diamond trade of India for many years, he had amassed immense treasures. He met with no losses, his caravans were expeditious, traded with success, and returned in safety. One enterprise made way for another; every successive project was formed on a greater scale, and all were terminated with success. Business was swayed by his influence; merchants depended on his will; nobles and princes envied his magnificence, and even the caliph feared his power.

But Carazan lived only for himself. His maxim was never to move but with a prospect of advantage. He never gave to the poor; he never listened to the cries of distress; calls on his beneficence were repelled with a frown, and the poor had long learned to shun his dwelling.

But the city was suddenly surprised with a great change in his conduct. He removed to a principal square, in the centre of the city, and made proclamation to all the poor to resort to his palace. They flocked together by hundreds, and by thousands; and what was their surprise to find his halls set out with tables loaded with provisions; and such things as were most needed were dispersed in his porches and court-yards, and in the adjoining streets. People of all ranks were astonished, but could form no estimate of the motive of all this liberality and profusion.

On the second day Carazan made his appearance, and mounting a scaffold, raised for the purpose, he beckoned with his hand, and the murmur of applause and admiration suddenly ceased.

"People of Bagdat," said he, "I have hitherto lived to myself, henceforth I intend to live for the good of others. Listen attentively to the cause of the change you see. As I was sitting in my counting room, and meditating on future schemes of accumulating more wealth, I fell asleep; immediately I saw the angel of death approaching me like a whirlwind, and, ere I had time for recollection, he struck me with his dart. My soul instantly forsook my body, and I found myself at the bar of the Almighty. A dreadful voice from the judgment seat addressed me thus; 'You have lived entirely for yourself; you have done no good to others, and, for your punishment, God ordains that you be eternally banished from all society.' By a resistless power I felt myself driven from the throne, and carried, with inconceivable swiftness, through the heavens. Suns and systems passed me, and in a moment I was on the borders of creation. The shadows of boundless vacuity began to frown and deepen before a dreadful region of eternal silence, solitude, and darkness. In another moment the faintest ray of creation expired, and I was lost for ever.

"I stretched out my hands towards the regions of existence, and implored the Lord of creation to change my punishment if it were but to the torments of the damned, that I might escape that frightful solitude; but my horror was too dreadful for a moment's endurance, and I awoke. I adore the goodness of the great Father who has thus taught me the value of society, while he allows me time to taste the pleasures of doing good."

I am not about to improve this story by recommending it to my reader to dream for the sake of reformation. Indeed, I would hope there are no Carazans in the city; and yet I cannot but fear there are some to whom so pungent a dream would be very useful. Dreams will come when they will, and I am not certain I shall not have a proxysm of dreaming before I get through these numbers. But there is a mode of gaining information at the option of every person, and that I am about to recommend—I mean *reading*. Every person, it is well known, has not leisure for general reading, but every person can read enough to answer the purpose of the present recommmendation. The unhappy prejudice subsisting in this city against New-England sentiments would infallibly yield, and be completely dissipated by a proper acquaintance with the books in which those sentiments are contained. These prejudices have not been planted so deep, and cherished with such vigour, by the perusal of books, but by deriving an account of their books and tenets through a medium which has given them a stain foreign to their nature. It has been done by perversion.

True, indeed, a mind already prepossessed, and strongly opionated in error, may not be convinced by reading a book wherein the truth is stated. But even this will not hold good as a general rule, and in application to great bodies of people. The public mind, depraved as men are, will, generally, soon get right where the proper means of information are afforded.

I earnestly recommend to the people of the city to direct their attention to some of the books I shall hereafter name. They may rest assured that, even provided they should begin to read them with prejudice and disgust, they will end with pleasure and conviction; will rise up from the perusal acknowledging themselves instructed and cured of their antipathy. They may be assured that those persons whom they hear daily condemning those writings, have never read them. They are imposed upon in this business, and their credulity is shamefully abused. They are exactly like the man I have heard of within a day or two, who was strongly condemning the Triangle, and a person present asked him if he had read it; he said no, but had his account from Mr. Honeygall: well, but had Mr. Honeygall read it? Why no, he had not read it because he would not read so huge a thing; it would be wicked to read it. (Aside.) He never reads any thing.

So, reader, it is just as wicked for these sage censors of books to read the New-England books; and my word for it. they have not that sin to answer for. I ask the great and learned Dr. Buckram, (not that there is any such man in reality, I only use that name in a kind of allegorical or metaphysical sense;) I ask him whether he has ever read "Edwards on the Will?" Hah! he must think of it.

I must here let the good people into a secret of us bookmen which, perhaps, they don't know. It is the practice of some great readers, when they have read the title of a book and its contents, and cut into a paragraph, here and there, to say they have read it; nor do they think it lying. Some, I believe, venture so far as to say they have read a book, when they have only read the letters on the back side; but that is going too far; I never do that.

A powerful appeal lies from this subject to the patriotic feelings of every American. Were any of us in France or England and should hear them commending the writers of our own country, we should feel a secret gratification arising from our national attachment; we should feel it an honour done to ourselves; and so it would be. We feel a pleasure in hearing the greatness of Washington, the talents of Franklin and Rittenhouse, extolled. Every American is gratified at hearing the eloquent Chatham declare, in the British parliament, the American Congress to be one of the noblest bodies of men ever as-

sembled.* We are not backward to assert the equality, if not the ascendency, of our naval and military character. We boast of our inventions in the arts—of our success in manufactures.

And with such varied excellence of talent, would it not be extraordinary if, in the theological department, something important and respectable had not been achieved? The fame of exhibiting to the world the first perfect experiment of religious freedom and toleration cannot be denied us; and Europe herself has enrolled and immortalized the name of our first theological writer. Is the thought incredible that such a man as Edwards should kindle the genius and rouse the talents of his countrymen? He did it; and has been followed by a constellation of divines and writers on theology, to whom, if the immaturity of our seminaries denied the most perfect classical excellence, nature had not denied intellectual powers of the first order, and posterity will not deny the honour of the first grade of usefulness and importance in their profession.

The perusal of their writings, by the people of this city, will be attended with several good effects which I shall particularly distinguish.

1. It will diminish, if not exterminate, their prejudices, against *New Divinity*. For they will be surprised to find their great and leading doctrines, such as a general atonement, &c., to be the same as taught by the ablest and most orthodox divines since the reformation. The notion of moral inability was never a fabrication of the New-England divines; they will find, in the clearest and best writers of England, the same idea.

2. They will find themselves instructed and pleased. Books and Essays written, and Sermons delivered, in places where the work of God is carried on, cannot but derive an unction, a life and spirit, from the occasions that gave them birth. As the face of Moses shone when he descended from Sinai's glorious vision, so men greatly employed and honoured in the work of God, will transfuse through their writings the spirit of that work.

* At the commencement of the revolution.

It is a mournful fact, and will one day be as deeply deplored by those who have done it, as by those against whom it has been done, that the standard of opposition against those men and their writings should be lifted in New-York: that this highly-favoured city should be made the opposing bulwark—the breast-work of opposition. I rejoice to think that such walls as men build are not high, nor their foundations deep. I have no fear for the ultimate success of truth; but I fear for those who are opposing its progress—especially for those who are held in darkness by the craft and ambition of others. The chariot of salvation will not be impeded; it is guided by one who can save and can destroy.

It shall be the object of this Number to state to the good people of this city, and of the country and nation, wherever these presents shall come, what *documents*, and *books*, and *writings*—in short, what resources may be resorted to, in order to discover what those sentiments are which are falsely called *new divinity*, and, very unappropriately, *Hopkinsianism*. To this I now solicit the reader's attention.

Jonathan Edwards, I have elsewhere said, was the great master spirit of his day. Perhaps no man ever evinced more capaciousness of understanding and strength of intellect than he. This is the opinion of very competent judges, and probably will not be denied. His writings are numerous, among which his Inquiry concerning the Will was his greatest production, and may be considered as forming the basis of the distinguishing tenets of New-England divinity, as far as it contains any distinctive features. Of this I have spoken in the former series. After this, his work on Religious Affections may perhaps be next in point of importance. Had this been the only book he published, it would have rendered his name immortal. On this ground, explored by thousands of writers, he was often original, generally interesting, and always unanswerable. His History of Redemption, a work left immature, was sufficient to show the force and splendour of his talents. Various other important works were also published by him, which brevity forbids me to enumerate; but his numerous sermons, as many of them were delivered in periods of religious revival, and were more blessed

as instrumental to that great work, if we except Whitefield's, than any ever delivered in this country, are without all parallel among American sermons; and for depth of thought, force of argument, and brilliance of imagination; for a majestic display of truth, solemnity of address, and power to arrest the conscience, they have never been surpassed. He had the rare talent of uniting metaphysical discussion with practical and experimental truth; of appealing with equal force and propriety to the understanding and to the passions.

The style of Edwards is plain and simple, and evinces to the judicious reader the progress of a gigantic mind moving through fields of truth, careless of the artificial adjustment and fastidious polish of diction. That inelegancies may be discovered in his style, I certainly will not deny. But when those who dare accuse him of "verbiage" can show equal vigour of intellect, let them boast. When those who dare censure his preaching as unprofitable can show equal trophies of success, let them triumph.

Far be it from me to say that Edwards was correct in all his sentiments, a felicity which rarely falls to the lot of a voluminous writer. Even Calvin was not correct in every thing. Neither do I pretend or wish to say that he agreed in every point with those who since his day are denominated Hopkinsians. But I will say to every reader, if he will read Edwards on the Will —on Religious Affections—on Redemption—on God's Last End in the Creation of the World—on Moral Virtue—on Revivals of Religion—and various points discussed in his sermons, he will have before him some *books* and some *documents* whereby to judge of Hopkinsian tenets.

Samuel Hopkins, whose dreaded and execrated name is so often pronounced with strange horror by thousands of people who never read a page of his writings, so often held up to censure and obloquy by an equal number of men who boast of having read his works, but are equally ignorant of what they contain—Samuel Hopkins wrote and published a Body of Divinity. I shall here say little of this work; it is sold in several bookstores, and is in many libraries of this city. I may safely say, however, that it is one of the noblest bodies of divinity in

the English language; and I will venture to predict that it will stand as high on the shelves of future libraries, and be regarded as a work of as much utility and merit, as Pictete, Ridgely, and Turetin, when the ignorant and maniacal rage against Hopkinsianism shall have subsided; and especially when it shall have the good fortune to be judged by those who have read it.

With regard to the leading sentiments of Hopkins, they do not differ materially from the most approved and orthodox divines, and the most eminent and standard writers since the reformation. Hopkins surely did not agree with them in every point, nor did any two important writers, that ever wrote, agree in all points, Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Beza, Zuinglius, Bucer, Carolstadt, all differed from each other; nor less did Baxter, Flavel, Owen, Watts, Dodriddge, &c. differ. With reverence be it spoken, even Mason, Ely, Romeyn, and Milldoler, do not agree in all points.

Besides a body of divinity, Hopkins wrote various tracts and sermons, in all of which the grand and fundamental truths of religion are judiciously and ably handled. As a faithful minister of Christ, a public teacher, and an elementary writer on theological and moral subjects, the American church has had few more useful or more distinguished men. His style is plain, unornamented, and simple; with less strength and originality of conception than Edwards, his style verged nearer towards neatness and precision. In reading his pages, you do not perceive inanity of mind, carefully concealed by an elaborate texture of smooth and spider's-web phrases; nor an eternal and dead level of common places solemnly trimmed with insipid pomp, and the soporific monotony of easy periods, rounded as regularly as a thousand rolls of gingerbread. He wrote like a man of sense, who dared to think for himself; like a man of thought, who was master of his subject; like a man of piety, who regarded the truth; and if sometimes he justifies the suspicion of affecting to trace new paths, to launch into new speculations, show me the writer of eminence who is not more or less susceptible of that kind of ambition, or whose powers of mind rendered similar endeavours more successful, and, of course, more warrantable.

After Edwards, and Hopkins, Bellamy may next be noticed as a writer of the same order, or school, if you please. His principal work is True Religion Delineated. Though this book is doubtless not received as a piece of divine inspiration, yet it is considered by many as a standard work: and such it ought to be, and will be considered, where true religion is understood, and where the reign of prejudice is not completely established. After this, his Dialogues on Theron and Aspasio, and The Glory of the Gospel, are works of high and distinguished merit.

Besides these, Ballamy published various tracts and sermons, much in the same strain of sentiment; and though certainly not to be admired as models of style and composition, they are on a level with the writings of the most pious and orthodox divines. Few ministers of the gospel were more able, faithful, or successful, in the day in which he lived, or since his time; or more honoured by Christ as the visible instrument of turning many to righteousness.

Dr. Jonathan Edwards, the son of the President, who was himself also President of Union College, did honour, to his country; and it if was not to be expected that one nation should produce more than one man equal to his father; if it was impossible for him to raise, yet he sustained the name, by the vigour and acuteness of his literary productions. What he seemed to want in greatness and extent of understanding he made up by sagacity of judgment and acuteness of reasoning; and I shall scarcely be contradicted when I say, that in penetration and force of intellect he has rarely been surpassed.

His publications on the Atonement, and against Dr. Chauncy, have afforded to his adversaries the most unpleasant specimens and proofs of his reasoning powers.

Edwards, Hopkins, and Bellamy, have long since retired from their stations in the church militant, and, I trust, are now reaping the fruits of their labours in the mansions of joy and rest, together with many souls, the seals of their ministry on earth. And it is matter of consolation, to reflect that the idle clamours and reproaches which envy, pride, and ambition, are incessantly venting against these men and their doctrine, cannot pollute

the air, nor disturb the repose of those peaceful mansions. And if their persecutors and opposers would, for once, institute a just comparison between the tokens of divine approbation bestowed on the labours of these men, and on their own, it would give a chill to their ambition—would rebuke their pride, and change the voice of vituperation into confession and self reproach.

Besides the writings of these men already enumerated, there are many writers of the same class now living, which circumstance ought, perhaps, rather to impose silence.

Their theological magazines, religious tracts, and periodical publications, the work of associations of ministers of that description, in which all their sentiments are abundantly disclosed, are immensely numerous. Sermons, however, form the principal department of their writings; and although it cannot be denied that they have published sermons which in point of execution are but ordinary, and perhaps sometimes incorrect in sentiment, yet they have also published sermons, which, in defiance of the overwhelming charge of "verbiage, tautology, and nonsense," will assume and maintain their station in the first class of that order of composition.

If Emmons has been charged with some peculiarities of sentiment, it should be remembered that those peculiarities are not chargeable on him as a Hopkinsian, but as a writer. I say this for the man of sense and candour who may read these pages. As for the bigot, blind with prejudice, and mad with intolerance, and who, like the countryman in Boston, would be liable to mistake the stuffed skin of a quadruped for the charter of Massachusetts, I leave him to hug his prejudices. Any peculiar notions entertained by Emmons, are no more chargeable to Hopkinsianism, than the peculiar notions and reveries of Stubner, or Blandrata, were chargeable to the doctrines of the Reformation. Stubner was among the reformers, and so is Emmons among the Hopkinsians.

I shall not pronounce on the peculiar opinions of Emmons. Whether they are correct or not, I leave to the decisions of that day which shall rectify every error, and bring truth to light. But they are surely not of a nature which ought to interfere with christian fellowship and communion. But Emmons, re-

garded as a sermonizer, is surpassed by few writers of that class, either living or dead; and few sermons, considered in all respects, are superior to his. His subjects, generally important, are judiciously selected, and skilfully raised out of an appropriate text. His sermons are read with ease and pleasure: with pleasure, because his object is perfectly obvious, his conceptions clear, and his arrangement natural and luminous; and with ease, because short, and always rapidly progressing.

"*Semper festinat ad eventum.*"

Emmons is an original of the noblest class, and certainly one of the most decided character. No candid reader, who reads for instruction, is disappointed, or rises from the perusal of one of his sermons without some benefit. His sermons generally indicate extensive knowledge and acuteness of judgment. His style is neat, appropriate, pure, and correct, though less elegant and splendid than that of Hall, and less easy and graceful, perhaps, than that of Jay. In fervency and pathos, we may have some in our own country who excel him; and his sermons are, perhaps, too didactic—too much the essay, and not sufficiently the popular address, to answer, in the best manner, all the ends of preaching. With less of the flowers of May, or fruits of October, than some others, his sermons may be compared to the meridian hour of a clear day in June, when the sun puts forth his strength, the summer displays her maturity, and vegetation all her energy. I say nothing of any uncommon turn to a passage of scripture he may give—of any new distinction, or modification, in point of speculation; for we live in a day when disputes between Monothelites and Monophisites, Realists and Nominalists, no longer terminate on the rack or gibbet; when wars between Troglodytes and Brobdignagoreans no more lay waste cities; nor are the differences of Bigendians and Littlendians to be considered as heresies.

The reader of Emmons' Sermons is like one passing over an extensive and well-cultivated farm; the fences are substantial and erect; the fields are verdant, square, and regular, not *Triangular;* the meadows are separated from the woodlands,

and the pastures from the tillage: the mansion house is not lofty, but neat and spacious, and speaks itself the seat of wealth but not of dissipation—of happiness, but not of ambition. The prospects are diversified with hills and valleys, and enriched with springs and rivulets.

The audiences who heard Emmons have heard more truth, and are better instructed, waving all peculiar and discriminating points, than those who heard Davies, or Weatherspoon; and trusting that time will cure prejudices, and assured that selfishness will soon yield the ground to a benevolence *purely disinterested*, I frankly declare, that I would as leave be thought the writer of the sermons of Emmons, as of Watts or Baxter, Hall or Fuller, Sherlock or Tillotson, Saurin or Claude, Bossuet or Bourdaloue.

After the critic has screwed up his nose, scowled, hissed, snuffed, tossed, and pronounced a few such phrases as "ignorance!—no taste!—impudence!" and the like, I would request him to read a sermon of Davies, of Saurin, of Baxter, of Sherlock, of Massilon, and of Emmons; and then ask himself which of them conveys the most important truth, with fewest words, most simplicity and force, least affectation and labour, and greatest clearness. I must caution him, however, to break fairly through the blinding halo that surrounds great names; to be on his guard against the splendour of the great assemblies of London and Paris, where nobles and monarchs worship; to fortify his auditory nerves against the titilation of pompous phrases, and majestic circumlocution, which add little to the force, beauty, or impression of truth. A sermon is not the greater, because a monarch heard it, nor the better because he admired it.

A sermon is, or ought to be, a portion of the gospel of Christ adapted to the attention of a public audience: its style and manner may be compared to the vessels on which a public feast is served up. Important truth is the food itself. Now, the service of dishes may be of gold, silver, porcelain, or common earthenware, pewter, or even wood. Some forty years ago, when the good people of this country used to eat on wooden trenchers, even a pewter service was thought quite splendid and luxurious. Emmons treats his audience in a handsome service of

silver; and if there are those who can go as high as gold, enriched with diamonds, I am glad. Let it be remembered, however, that very indifferent food may be served up in gold, and many a deadly draught has lurked in a golden goblet.

The pious and venerable West, "whose praise is in all the churches" where he is known, and whose full value cannot be known, but by personal acquaintance, now more than eighty years of age, is still discharging the duties of the sacred office. Three times has his congregation heard him pass through the New Testament, expounding verse by verse the sacred oracles; illustrating and enforcing them with a propriety, acuteness, and vigour, of which this country has seen no parallel: nor has any minister of the present day a happier talent in that most useful branch of public instruction, or is "mightier in the scriptures." Dr. West's publications have not been numerous; but what few things he published, will be sufficient to perpetuate his name with honour. His treatises on moral agency, and on the atonement, will best show their force in an attempt to answer them. With that inattention to the ornaments of style characteristic of his early time, he evinced great vigour of thought, and justness of reasoning.

Christ has honoured this worthy man in an extraordinary manner: for the space, I believe, of sixty years, in which he has discharged, without a stain, the work of the ministry, he has from time to time seen the work of God carried on amongst his people; and very many souls have been given him as seals of his ministry, who will be stars in the crown of his rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

Though I would willingly dispense with mentioning the names of persons living, from delicacy to their feelings, yet that silence, any further than is imposed by brevity, cannot comport with the design of this enumeration, which is to show how remote from candour and truth are those reflections and sneers, which deny to New-England the name of writer or theologian. And I feel it my duty to ask many young men of education and talents, but recently from that quarter, who have established themselves in this city in the various branches of business; I

ask them, whether it gives them pleasure to hear such reflections,

"Tossed in the jest from wind to wind?"

I ask them, whether they have become so triangular—so sealed with prejudice, as really to believe there are no writers there?

They peradventure may have heard of the name of Dwight, the maternal grandson of the great Edwards; perhaps they may have been educated under his eye and instruction, and, if so, they have heard his course of theological lectures: shall I believe, that since they have come within the radiance of superior luminaries, that they are truly converted to the belief, that there is *nothing in New-England*—that all there is "verbiage, tautology, and nonsense"—"no books, no documents, no writtings?" Some of them I know to be sons of New-England clergymen of eminence and distinction. But here, alas! they have learned the humiliating fact that their fathers knew nothing, and were nothing; or, if any thing, in comparison as a glow-worm to a star. They are, perhaps, almost ready to wrangle with their fate, and wish that Bamfylde Carew had been their father.

Take courage, young men, and hold up your heads; though a New-England Clergyman claim you, dare to own your parentage, dare to think yourselves educated, though educated by a Dwight. This language may seem enigmatical to persons at a distance: here it will be well understood, and will, I trust, produce a salutary effect. For I do firmly believe that so great a perversion of truth, so unaccountable a concealment of fact, never was practised or achieved under circumstances so extraordinary, in any other place on the globe. And whatever the reader may think, he may rest assured that we have before us the true ground of the controversy with New-England. I therefore said in the former series, that it all arose from ambition and envy. Our adversaries seem not to be aware that there is a great distinction between commerce and theology; nor yet is New-England altogether ignorant of commerce.

The man whose name has been mentioned would be an ho-

nour to any state or nation. An example so bright, a pattern so illustrious, will long be remembered by hundreds who have felt its powerful influence; will long flourish in the talents he has elicited and matured; will long be celebrated by the genius he has fostered. Dr. Dwight, for general erudition and correct taste, for powerful talents and uncorrupted integrity, is surpassed by no man in our country. Though he may have less starch in his composition than Dr. Buckram; though he may be less susceptible to the courtier's gentle touch than Dr. Weathercock; for he is not a man that says one thing and does another, yet he is, "take him for all in all," as great as *the Great Gun himself*.

The sermons, and other productions of his pen, are brilliant specimens of a great and vigorous intellect, and not unworthy of a descendant of Edwards.

Since the writings of New-England are accused of consisting of nothing but "verbiage, tautology, and nonsense," I will mention one writer, at least, whose sermons, if the reader may give himself the trouble to examine, I can assure him he will acquit of his heavy charge. Smalley's Sermons are able and handsome specimens of clear and conclusive reasoning; they abound little in bold assertions, and his deductions are made with caution and correctness. Nothing but the prejudice of the day withholds from those sermons the high reputation due to solid reasoning, and an able and masterly display of important truth. Warburton reasoned with more erudition, and Sherlock certainly with many more adventitious advantages, but I request the "Great Gun" himself to lay a sermon of Smalley side by side with one of Sherlock's, or of Tillotson's, or of his own, if he pleases; compare them by paragraphs, and I put him upon his honour, as a gentleman, where I am happy to say I do not scruple him, though I do much as a metaphysician, to say which of them resembles most the progress of Euclid through his 47th.

There is scarcely a writer who carries more of demonstration through every successive period; nor would there be a better test of this, than would result from an attempt to show where his argument fails.

Doctor S. Spring's "Moral Disquisitions," at the very sound of which some nervous people, I suppose, will fall into the moral-

phobia, is the last thing I shall mention. This small book, if read with attention and candour, will not fail to carry conviction to the mind; it dwells on those grand points in which New-England divinity is made the subject of censure. But its fate has been to be condemned by those who have not read it.

There are many writings and publications, the productions of a much younger class of men, which, while they exhibit handsome specimens of classical excellence, maintain and fully illustrate the same strain of sentiment and doctrine; but brevity forbids their enumeration. New-England in a space of two hundred and fifty miles square, has, in fact, produced more sermons, essays, religious tracts, and theological publications, and those which are respectable and important in their kind, than all the rest of America. Nor is there a people on earth, whose religious tenets are better known, or more ably defended. Yet, we are solemnly assured by an Anti-Hopkinsian sectarian, that there are no *books, documents*, &c., by which their principles can be known.

The truth is, there is no such sect of people on earth as *Hopkinsians*, and I would to God there had never been such an appellation known among Christians as Calvinists; especially, without they had adopted the name of a more lovely and Christ-like man. This rage for nick-naming sects, and exalting the opinions and authorities of men, is but a younger shoot of the grand apostacy.

The books and writings I have mentioned in the very imperfect sketch above, are not censured or exploded, on account of their faults, regarded as literary productions; far from it: that is the least of all the fears of their adversaries. On the contrary, the known conviction they carry with them, the force of native genius they evince, and the spirit of piety they breathe, is what renders them so much dreaded, and is the real clue to the motive of those unwearied endeavours to keep them out of sight, and to hiss them into silence.

Perhaps I ought not to close so copious an account of writers, without saying something about the Investigator. It was a rule with the Spectator, that, so long as he was unknown, he might say what he pleased of himself; might even applaud his own

writings at pleasure; and he often did it. I see no reason why I have not the same right; and perhaps it is even more necessary for me to do it, than it was for him: however, as to that I shall do as I please. In the mean time, I shall say a few things.

In the first place, they may say many unpleasant things, but they cannot say I am not a writer. As a proof that I can write, here is the Triangle. It has been written, and it will be read; it will spread wide, and will be remembered. In the second place, this thing has not been excited merely as an attack on error; it is offered to the public as a detergent to an intolerant, bigoted, and persecuting spirit; as a diluent to the moral buckram with which some minds are most dreadfully encased; as a refrigerent to the calenture of ambition; as an emulgent to a selfish heart; as a sudorific to the sedative frigidity of hatred; as a tonic to the atony of general benevolence; as a laxative to the gripe of spiritual pride: in fact, as a universal nostrum against meddling with those who are disposed to think for themselves. And, from concurrent prognostics, I think it must produce a good effect.

In the last place the Investigator is a physiognomist; gives lectures on heads, and can draw portraits. No portrait has yet appeared, though I perceive some rough etchings in the former series have been readily claimed. One thing I engage, if I hereafter draw a portrait, the true Bucephalus will instantly, as of old, neigh at his own likeness.

INVESTIGATOR.

No. II.

I SAID, in a former number, that attempts had been made to excite an odium against Hopkinsianism. To many, no doubt, this appears an unjust accusation. But, however it may appear, it is true, and can be fully vindicated. They say that Hopkinsians hold that a Christian ought to be willing to be damned. The most that Hopkinsians contend for is, *that there may be a*

time when a Christian may feel in his heart to acquiesce in the justice of God, even though God should cast him off for ever. Let us examine this point.

The clamours on this subject are too absurd and ridiculous to be heard with patience. I said, perhaps, enough in a former number; but I will here repeat, that the Hopkinsians hold no more, relative to this matter, than must be admitted by all who believe in divine providence.

Their teachers are in the habit of insisting much on the doctrine of submission to the divine will; which, I hope, will not be considered as an error. They hold, that all rational creatures ought to feel perfect resignation to the will of God. But resignation implies holiness, and God has manifested it to be his will, that holy creatures should be happy. A holy creature, therefore, is not required to be willing to be damned, because it is not God's will that he should be damned. They dwell much on this point, that every real Christian entertains a strong sense of his own desert, and of the justice of God, in his condemnation, as a sinner; and they believe that a Christian may be rightly disposed towards God, *i. e.* may love him supremely before he has any evidence that God will save him. In this case, therefore, the converted sinner sees, and fully acquiesces in, the justice of God: nay, is often heard to say, "I feel that God would be just in my condemnation; I feel and know that I deserve his wrath; and I see clearly the beauty and the glory of his justice, as well as of his mercy."

The elements, and every point in this whole business, are now before the reader, and may be reduced to a set of definite propositions, which, for the sake of perspicuity, I will here set down.

1. Every rational creature ought to feel perfect resignation to the will of God. Will any one deny this?

2. Perfect resignation to God's will implies holiness, *i. e.* love to God.

3. It is the will of God that creatures who love him shall not be miserable. This will not be denied.

4. Every good man has a strong sense of the justice of God

in his condemnation as a sinner, for without this he would have no idea of grace in his salvation. This cannot be denied.

The promise of God to save a believer, by grace, cannot diminish that believer's sense of his own desert. Even pardon clearly implies the justice of punishment, or else there can be no grace in pardon.

5. The Christian may feel rightly disposed towards God and his government, that is, may love God, before he has an evidence that God will save him. This is out of the *triangle*, and will be denied. But I beg the reader, as he values the truth, to attend with candour to this point. It may affect his own religion and hopes more than he is aware of. This proposition is denied, because it militates against the grand fortress and strong hold of what I call selfishness.

I justify the proposition by the following reasons:

1. The real Christian may judge incorrectly of his own exercises and feelings. They may be of the right kind, without his having any degree of confidence in them. Thus I have no doubt it happens, that many a converted soul does not come to a due estimate of his exercises towards God, for hours, nay, days and months after his conversion. He has the feelings of a child, but no confidence in those feelings. It is a very rare thing that a renewed sinner is able to say, "This is faith—this is love—this is holiness—I am born again," immediately, the first moment after his regeneration. When I see a Christian come forward in that manner, I am doubtful, and have reason to fear he is deluded. Nor will he be very ready to give in to the opinion of any one who may officiously tell him, he is a renewed man; and such persons there are always at hand. He will perhaps say, "I think I love God—I seem to perceive the glory and fulness of Christ, but the matter is too important; I fear I am mistaken."

2. The Christian's confidence of salvation is not the cause, but the effect, of his love to God. There is not a more fatal error in the church, and to the souls of men, than the supposition, that the sinner begins to love God in consequence of discovering that God is going to save him. The thing itself speaks and shows sheer selfishness, with the broadest grin. I am

amazed that the bare suggestion should not excite alarm and suspicion, distrust and aversion. What says our Saviour? "If ye love them that love you, what thank have ye?" Do not even sinners love those that love them? Such a kind of love is no sign of grace. That which I feel towards God, when I see that he will save me, is gratitude. Nothing can be more certain than that all the wicked on earth, and that all the devils in hell, could they discover that God was going to make them eternally happy, would love him for it, would feel very grateful, would think him a very good being. Let those who trust in such a kind of love to God be assured, that their foundation is sand.

3. The nature of that love, which is due to God from all creatures, shows, with the brightness of a sunbeam, that it is far above gratitude, or any return or reflection of kindness. What is the ground of the most perfect and exalted friendship among men? Is it a mere requital of kindness, a reflection of interest? Does it rest on the narrow ground of reciprocal benefits? Is it not grounded on the high and estimable qualities which two persons may discover in each other? What, if General Washington had reprieved a criminal from death or paid his ransom, would that criminal perceive in that generous act the highest and utmost ground of respect? Robespierre, or Cateline, might have done him the same kindness. In truth, all that God has done for one sinner bears no more proportion to the grounds of regard discoverable in his nature and character, than a single grain of sand bears to the universe. Hence,

4. Love to God is not the effect or consequence of faith; it is coeval with it, nay, it is in, and belongs to the nature of faith. Faith without love is good for nothing—is dead—is no better then the faith of devils. As there can be no holiness in the heart previous to love, and as nothing can be acceptable to God without holiness, we may rest assured that holiness is not only a concomitant, but a constituent of faith.

It may further be observed, that consequent on regeneration there can be no earlier exercise of heart than love to God; and, I leave it to the acute and able theologian to say, whether he can perceive any thing in regeneration itself, but a change of heart from hatred to the love of God. But by love, here, I

mean not only the effect, but the cause; not only the exercise, but the agency by which it is produced, that is, "the love of God shed abroad in the heart, by the Holy Ghost." "For he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."

I have, I trust, shown, that love to God is not the effect of faith. The arguments might indeed have been amplified, but that I deem unnecessary, till I shall see stronger reasons brought against them. And, if the love of God be considered objectively, it will be seen, that it cannot arise from a conviction that God is going to save the sinner. This, indeed, has been already stated, but the importance given to this point by the dispute before us, renders it necessary to be more explicit.

The unregenerate man is in a state of condemnation, of course, he has no evidence to believe that God will save him. If regeneration be an instantaneous work, which those admit with whom I am at issue, a moment of time does not intervene between the last sinful exercise of the unregenerate, and the first holy exercise of the regenerate man, or love to God: in a moment he finds himself loving God, and feels delight in the exercise. The first intellectual apprehensions of the *new man* are allowed to be various, by most orthodox divines, *old* as well as *new:* and this must be allowed from the nature of the case, and is confirmed by constant experience. I seldom ever heard two Christians relate having had similar apprehensions, either in the first moments, or first hours or days, of their Christian experience. Their first views may be supposed to take their complexion very much from their state of knowledge, and general habits of thinking. But though these cases doubtless embrace an endless variety, yet there is reason to believe, that God is the grand object of their apprehension; and that themselves are generally, if not entirely, out of the question, and not thought of.

I first mention the case of those persons who pretend to no recollection of the time of their conversion; and many such there are who give abundant evidence of piety. Though they did not know it, there was a time when they were renewed by the Holy Ghost: no thought occurred to them, however, that they were born again, or were going to be saved; so far from

it, that if any one had told them they were Christians, they would have spurned the idea, and would have said, "you flatter and deceive me." What may we suppose were their exercises during this time? Why, at times they had clear and affecting views of the loveliness and glory of God, of the person and character of Christ, of his fulness and all-sufficiency as a Saviour; but, then, they dare not trust to these views and feelings.

I next mention the case of such as suppose they know the time of their conversion. What were their first views? "There was a God;—he was an infinitely lovely and excellent being. The world was his;—all nature was beautiful and glorious;—all creatures seemed to praise him. The Bible was a new book. There was a Christ willing and able to save the vilest sinner. The gospel was free; the fault was all in the sinner." And I declare to the reader, that not one only, nor two, nor ten persons have I heard say, that their view of Christ's sufficiency was such, that they thought they could persuade their friends immediately to embrace him.

But while the new-born Christian had these views, what of himself? Did it occur to him, at the very first instant, that God was going to save him, and, therefore, that he loved God for it? Was it his very first apprehension that he should be saved; and was that the cause of his joy and love? The idea is shocking, and from my soul, I believe, is revolting to every pious mind; nor do I believe there is a Christian on earth whose recollection of his own experience will confirm it. I readily grant, the Christian's first apprehension may be of the Saviour; but then it will be of him as the son of God. "If thou believest in thine heart that God has raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, thou shalt be saved." "But," said Christ to Peter, "whom do ye say that I am?" "Thou art the son of God; thou art the king of Israel." "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Christ's person, character, and work, together, form the great object of faith; the assent of the understanding, and cordial consent of the heart to it, form the exercise. But the notion of appropriating faith, so called, *i. e.* that Christ died for me, and

laying this as the ground and motive of my love to Christ, and prior to it, and these points, in connexion with the doctrine of particular atonement, make out a dead faith and selfish love to the Christian, and an innocent unbelief to the sinner.

To perceive beauty, is to love. Whatever the soul's first apprehension of God is, it is attended with a coeval perception of his glorious excellence and beauty. I wish the candid and ingenuous reader to observe that *acts*, in no case, are the proper object of love. A series of great actions indicate a great being; but it is not the actions, but the actor we love. But a good action done to me indicates no more goodness than as though it were done to some other man. I ought, in fact, to love God as much for doing good to my neighbour as to myself; and this I certainly shall do, if I "love my neighbour as myself." If this be not correct, let its error be made out.

This brings into view an idea of what is usually termed *disinterested* love, against which a more unreasonable clamour has been raised, and justified by more ridiculous shifts, and more groundless and shameless arguments, than are usually seen marshalled in the field of controversy. Be it admitted, though it is by no means always true, that the new born soul's first apprehension is of Christ—his first exercise of love is towards Christ; yet there is no otherwise an act of appropriation than what is implied in the perception, "that the Saviour is infinitely glorious and excellent, willing, and all-sufficient to save; the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." He looks up to God, and beholds him a God of love, ruling his kingdom with perfect goodness; that all creatures are safe; that all interests committed to him are secure. It does not, at this time, occur to him that he is born again, or shall be saved. His mind is filled with objects infinitely more glorious and majestic than any consideration of his own interest or salvation. And, although a great leader of the Triangular scheme has lately cautioned his hearers, from his pulpit, to be aware of that "*base and absurd philosophy, which ought not to be dignified by the name of philosophy, which teaches men to leave their own happiness and interest out of the question;*"* yet it is a truth which every Christian should know and feel, that a view of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ, breaking forth on the mind of the sinner, and especially for the first time, will leave him a little room to think of his own dear self, or of his interest or salvation.

Job seemed to have a great deal of that base and absurd philosophy, when he said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." David, also, had much of that philosophy, when he exclaimed, "when I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars, which thou hast made, Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" &c.

In that solemn hour a sense of the vileness and desert of sin falls upon the renewed soul with the weight of mountains; he is amazed at the mercy that has preserved him, and he exclaims, with all the feelings of his heart, and energies of his soul, "God would be lovely if he should cast me off for ever." How little is he inclined, at that time, or any other time, to seize upon some divine promise, and boldly and arrogantly threaten *to keep Christ to his word*. I use this phrase because it was very recently used by another Triangular, who boldly exhorted his Christian hearers to *keep Christ to his word*, i. e. to make him fulfil his promises.

Alas! whither does this strain of Antinomianism tend? What havock it has already made, and what ruin it threatens! But is there need to exhort mankind to be more selfish? is there ground to fear that they will not interpret the bible sufficiently favourable to their own character and state? Shall they be exhorted, if I may so say, to toe the mark, and challenge the Saviour to come and meet them upon his peril? Let that great master in Israel be assured, that he need be under no apprehensions lest his hearers shall not be sufficiently alive to their own *interest and happiness*. They will do that in obedience to man's ruling passion.

* Dr. Mason.

I have dwelt long on this subject; have gone carefully over that ground pointed at with so much scorn, and regarded with so much terror. It amounts to this; that a man under the influence of clear views of God and his government, and of his own exceeding vileness, all which he may have without any certain evidence of his own good estate, may fully acquiesce in the justice of God—may see that God would be just in casting him off, and may feel as though he could love and adore God, if he in fact, should do it. Some writers, called Hopkinsian, may have dwelt particularly on this point, but it is a matter which has no necessary connexion with Hopkinsianism—is found in old writers as well as new. Devils who are now suffering the wrath of God, are under the same obligation to love and adore him as the angels of light in heaven. If, because he is punishing them, they have a right to hate and abhor him, then they certainly do right in making war on his kingdom.

The reason why such a clamour is raised against this idea is, because men cannot endure the thought that the glory and honour of God should be preferred to the happiness of a wicked man.

No Hopkinsian on earth ever held, or pretended, that a willingness to be damned constitutes a habitual exercise of the Christian; for it is not the will of God that a real Christian should be damned; it would be revolting against God's will, and every Christian knows it; but the willingness contended for, is restricted to those moments, while, as yet, the regenerate man has no certain evidence that he is a Christian, or that God will save him, yet still he loves God, and is, of course, willing that God's will shall be done. I believe I am understood, and if so, I have only to say, that on this ground, the Hopkinsian is willing to be at issue with his adversary.

If it be admitted that a man can love God before he has evidence that God will save him, the point is settled; that he ought so to do, nay, that those ought so to do who know he never will save them, few will dare to deny: and this, I think, to the discerning mind, shows what the proper motive of love to God is. Saints and angels do, in fact, love God for the same reason for which wicked men and devils are bound to

love him, viz. because he is infinitely excellent and worthy to be loved.

Whether a Christian can feel willing to be an enemy to God for ever, has no connexion with this entire discussion, since the *willingness* to suffer, of which I have been speaking, relates wholly to the penalty of God's law, and not to a transgression of it. The breath and words, therefore, spent on that idea are wholly wasted, and the terrible blows often given to it, are dealt out to a shadow.

INVESTIGATOR.

N. III.

A CONTRAST.

1. Men are condemned for the sin of Adam.	1. Men are condemned for their own transgressions.
2. Men have a natural or physical incapacity to obey God.	2. Men have no inability to obey God but what arises from want of inclination, or will.
3. Christ made atonement, or propitiation, for none but the elect.	3. Christ made atonement, or propitiation, for all mankind.
4. The gospel invites none but the elect to come to Christ.	4. The gospel invites all mankind, to come to Christ.
5. None but the elect are under obligation to believe in Christ.	5. All who hear the gospel are under obligation to believe in Christ.
6. The elect are not bound to believe in Christ till he shows them that he will save them.	6. Every sinner who hears the gospel is bound to believe as much at one time as another.

Hence,

7. No man will be condemned at last for unbelief, because the elect will all believe—

For,

8. Faith consists in believing that Christ died for *me*.

Hence,

9. Those for whom Christ did not die, cannot believe he died for them, unless they can believe what is not true; therefore, they cannot be condemned for unbelief.

Moreover,

10. Faith is neither an exercise of the will nor understanding, but a *divine principle*.

11. The Christian begins to love Christ when he finds Christ will save him, and that is the true motive of his love,

Wherefore,

12. Saving faith is before, and, of course, without love to God, or holiness, unless holiness be different from love.

13. A Christian cannot be disinterested—the interest of self must be at the bottom, and the moving spring of all his actions—even of his religion.

Hence,

7. All who hear the gospel and do not believe, will be condemned for their unbelief—

For,

8. Faith consists in "receiving and resting on Christ alone for salvation, as he is offered in the gospel."

Hence,

9. As Christ died for all men, any sinner who hears the gospel can receive and rest on him alone for salvation; therefore, any unbeliever will be condemned.

Moreover,

10. Faith is an exercise both of the will and understanding, and a *divine principle* is a phrase without an idea.

11. The Christian begins to love Christ before he knows he will save him and loves him for other and higher reasons.

Wherefore,

12. Saving faith is love in its very nature, and is a holy exercise, because love is holiness.

13. A shameless and barefaced confession, as unworthy of a philosopher as a christian!

Reader, here is a contrast to the purpose; read, it, and be astonished; and, I think, you cannot but be astonished. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of selfish Antinomianism?

When I had got thus far, sickened with the odious narrowness, the grovelling selfishness of this triangular place, I dropped my pen and retired to rest. "In the thoughts and visions of my head upon my bed," I fancied myself travelling alone, through an extensive and desolate country; it was towards night, and being on foot, I seemed weary with the labours of a long day's travel; I began to look out for a house of entertainment, but could discern little save now and then a hamlet of unpromising aspect, and at a distance from the road. At length, however, a fabric, of extraordinary appearance, drew my attention, and, as I approached, a signal, near the gate, gave me the agreeable notice that it was a public house. This building was perfectly triangular, resembling an obtuse prismatic cone, cut perpendicular to its principal axis, standing on its base, rising to a great elevation, and terminated in a spire. It was very pleasantly situated on the point of junction between two large streams of water, and appeared like a place of great traffic.

I perceived much company in the house, and, on entering, a man immediately presented himself whom I concluded to be the landlord. His body was exceedingly corpulent and large, with a little three-square head, and eyes very sharp and twinkling, which seemed "to look at one another."* However, he received me with a smile, and on asking for entertainment he assented, and told me that in his house I would find accommodations. The company were all strangers to me; nor did I ever see so many cross-eyed people together before. I took a seat by myself, and waited, with some impatience, for supper. But my curiosity and astonishment were equally excited to perceive, that not only the house itself, but every thing in it, was in a triangular shape; the doors and windows, the rooms and fireplaces, all exhibited that form. The chairs and tables were tripods—the plates and platters, triangular concaves, and the glasses and tumblers, hollow prisms; but every thing elegant in its kind, and highly finished.

At length supper was announced, and I took a seat at a three-cornered table, with a numerous company, who seemed as well

* Genius theologiæ, Novi Ebori.

pleased as myself at the sight of something edible. We commenced with little ceremony, and happening to sit near the master of the house, I attempted some conversation with him. He was affable, communicative and sententious, as tavern keepers usually are. The provision, of which there were three courses, appeared well, but had, I thought, somewhat of a peculiar taste. I called for pepper, and for salt, but still it did not do; and, I believe, the landlord himself perceived that my taste was not well suited. At length he said, "give me leave, sir, to help you to a relish which I think you will like, for I have never had one at my table who did not admire it."

"This, sir," continued he, "is, perhaps, the most famous root in the world; its botanical name is *amor sui;* it is a very fine root for the table, and is beginning to be cultivated in these parts, particularly in *two large botanic gardens*, whence it is sent all over the country, and they find it very profitable." And perceiving he had some knowledge in botany, while he was putting some of it on my plate, I asked him if he knew to which of the Linnæan classes it belonged. He said, he believed it was to the Pantandria. Whilst I was recollecting whether Linnæus had such a class, he said, smiling, "the name of this root sounds better in Latin than in English; it would hardly do to give it a translation."

I perceived they ate of it, round the table, by spoonfuls; and the landlord said, for his part, he could, at any time, make a meal of it; in fact, wanted nothing else.

For the first moment, I thought the taste of the *amor sui* very agreeable. It had a racy and aromatic gusto, highly grateful to the palate; but, after a while, it began to bite my tongue, burn my lips, draw up my mouth, contract my œsophagus; and, in short, the more I tasted it the worse it was. It put me in mind of Allen's attempt to eat the olive. A gentleman, near me, seeing my embarrassment, observed that, like most high-flavoured things, at first, it seemed rather pungent and harsh; "but," said he, "sir, I have no doubt you will soon be fond of it." A sour looking robust fellow, whose eyes were almost wrong side outwards, declared it was now used at every genteel table, and he never saw a gentleman but what liked it.

"Why," said he, "in Scotland, my native country, some call it the ministerial root, because so very convenient to cultivate on their glebes; it succeeds well on lands which will produce nothing else, and will, in this country, soon be thought more valuable than the potato; and a man that does not like it must be a fool." He further added, that he had recommended it, with great success, in this country; that he, and several others, were determined to bring it into general cultivation and use.

In a region in all respects so perfectly trigonal, the effect was wonderful. I could not repress my curiosity, and I feared I should give offence by appearing to inspect the various little articles which lay about my plate, not to say that a three-square spoon did not very well suit my mouth. As the landlord seemed willing to converse, I at last summoned sufficient confidence to inform him, that my curiosity and admiration had been not a little excited at the very singular form of his house and furniture; and I hoped he would not think me impertinent, in wishing to know the motive for adopting this figure.

After a little pause, with a serious look, he replied, that I was right in wishing an explanation, and that no offence would be taken.

"This mode of building, sir," said he, "I have received from my ancestors, as they did from their's; and you must know it is the true *primitive form.* Our first and grandest maxim is, *never to admit of innovation.*" This maxim is founded in the fact, that although a little good may come, yet a world of evil does actually come from innovations. "Why sir," continued he, with increasing earnestness, "all the bad practices in the whole world are but innovations. Satan was the first innovator, and his first innovation was made in heaven itself. Then, our mother Eve made a sad innovation on the tree of knowledge, and drew Adam, our father, into it. All human knowledge, sir, is but innovation upon man's primitive state, which was pure ignorance; and 'ignorance is the mother of devotion.'

With regard to this house, sir, it is of the true original, uncorrupted Tuscan order. Three posts were first set on the ground, and their tops fastened together: some say *four*, but, sir, I say *three*, which I can demonstrate from the composition

and resolution of forces; besides, three is the simplest form, and three denotes union, strength, and perfection; it is a mysterious number, as every body knows. When four-square buildings came in fashion, this primitive form was forced to flee into the wilderness, just as the true church did, when the great whore of Babylon usurped her place; and they will remain there, and emerge together." He paused here, and waited for my reply.

I told the landlord, he had satisfied me with the account he had given of his house. He acknowledged, that there were some inconveniences attending this figure of things; but, then, he said, that the beauty and charm of uniformity carried every thing before it; and, for his part, his object was to have but *one standard:* every thing must be alike. "But, sir," said he, "we carry this point farther than you imagine; for soon after our children are born, we have a triangular box, or hat, if you please, made for their heads, which they wear till the head grows in the box into the shape we wish; and, as they grow large, we enlarge those helmets according to their years, till at length the head becomes settled in the shape you see mine, which form we consider as highly favourable to acuteness of intellect." I then noticed, that the *os frontis* and *os occipitis* of his head formed the upper angles, and his chin the lower; so that the top of the head formed the base, and the chin the apex. In the course of the evening, I had opportunity to see that all his numerous children had heads of the same form as their father:* indeed, Lavater admits, that straight lines in the skull indicate strength and decision.

I perceived that this innkeeper was a mystic, had studied in the occult sciences, and was even acquainted with the cabalistic doctrines. "Sir," said he, "the form of all things about me, is founded in much deeper reasons than you probably imagine. You know, doubtless, that infinite perfection can only subsist in a triune being. Among intellectual creatures, there are but three grand orders, angels, men, and devils: there are, in all existence, but three kinds, spirit, matter, and mixed. The

* "What do the *old divines* say about it?"

heavenly regions are divided into three provinces, the first, second, and third heavens: duration has three modifications, present, past, and future. Adam's race are all in one of three habitations, earth, heaven, or hell: every man has three important states, in the body, out of the body, and again in the resurrection state. Every solid substance in nature has three dimensions, length, breadth, and height. But," continued he, "to come near to the point, you must be one side of a line, on the other side, or else exactly on it; and, as for the properties of the triangle, philosophers, from the days of Euclid, and long before until now, have never been able to explore them. By the triangle, the mariner guides his ship across the ocean, the surveyor measures the earth, and the astronomer the heavens. In a word, I take the triangle to be the symbol of strength, wisdom, and perfection; and I am strongly inclined to believe, that the soul of man is a perfect spiritual triangle."

Perceiving his enthusiasm, equal to that of Dr. Primrose for monogamy, or Don Quixote for chivalry, I nodded assent to his arguments, and presently desired I might be shown my lodgings. The landlord here informed me, that his beds, which were numerous, were all pre-occupied; and, unless I could accept of a fellow lodger, he could make no arrangement that would be convenient. In fact, he said, his usual custom was to put three in each bed, corresponding to the three sides of the triangle; when, in order to avoid mixing head and feet, each one must bend himself into the true figure. I assented, however, to take one, and a gentleman present ascended with me to the chamber, of which, I understood, there were about 20 or 30 in the house. But here, a difficulty arose: the bed was a perfect triangle, and so scanty, that even the sides of it were not as long as its intended occupants; however, each of us took an angle for our heads, and let our feet contend in the remaining angle; and they were antipodes, with a witness. A query arose, whether these were not the beds spoken of in scripture, where it says, "their bed is shorter than that one may stretch himself upon it, and their covering narrower than that he can wrap himself therein."

My fellow lodger told me that the landlord was invincible in

this whim, that he would have every bed in his house of the same size and shape; that it happened, not long since, that some gentlemen travelling, who had portable bedsteads with them of the usual form, had put up there, and, for their own convenience, had erected and prepared their own beds. The landlord finding it out, went up to their chamber in a rage, and by the aid of his servants, drew them out of bed, threw their furniture out of the window, and expelled them from his house.*

Our situation was such as promised little comfort; but being weary, I soon fell asleep, and had the following very extraordinary dream, which may be called a dream two stories high, or *Somnium in Somnio*.

I fancied myself in a region of great darkness, saving what dubious light arose from distant fires, whose pale and curling flames immediately brought to my mind the Tartarean lake. Before I could look round me a second time, a peal of thunder shook all the region, and a glare of light showed me thousands of beings seated round a vast amphitheatre facing a central throne. The lofty arches of Pendamonium, sustained on pillars of gold, and illuminated by corruscations of flame, from the burning lake, resembled a structure of solid fire. The perpetual noise of distant thunders and tempests, which shook the fabric, prevented my hearing the debates and consultations. At length, however, a voice more shrill than the loudest trumpet reached my ear. "Repair to your stations, and discharge your duties, or the city is lost to my kingdom. Show yourselves worthy of your prince, and, since it is the will of fate that you contend against a superior foe, acquire fame by boldness and perseverance. Address yourselves to every individual, and yield to nothing but almighty power. Be off, and let us see

> What reinforcement we can gain from hope
> If not, what resolution from despair."

The session was closed in a manner not very agreeable to spectators in the gallery, for no sooner was the last word pro-

* He would not endure them, "no, not for an hour."

nounced, than the vast assembly rose with a noise and rapidity equal to the explosion of a thousand magazines of powder; and each one, in departing, resembled the track of a meteor. I know not what became of me, till, some time after, I found myself walking down the park on that side next to Broadway, when, as usual, many people were moving up and down the street. The sun from his meridian throne smiled with peculiar radiance, and the prospect was gay and interesting. What most engaged my attention was innumerable winged genii, drest in the robes of Iris, with golden drapery floating around them, which seemed soft as air, and in a long train gradually melted into the invisible beam of the sun. One of these flew merrily about the head of each person I saw, keeping pace, as they walked, and acted much like bees, when busied in extracting the mellifluous dew from the heads of clover in a meadow: sometimes at one ear, and then at the other, sometimes for a moment perching on, then vaulting over, and flying round the head. The ladies' large bonnets appeared to form for them a pleasing vehicle, resembling an airy chariot below, and, when thus perched, they might be mistaken for a lofty and elegant plume. Excepting a little cloven foot, very sharp and threatening talons, which were, however, generally concealed, and a proboscis resembling an exquisitely fine dagger, I could see nothing about them which looked suspicious. Although nothing is extraordinary in a dream, in which wayward fancy delights to sport with the laws of reason, I was surprised at what I saw, and recollected the words of the poet:

> "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
> Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep."

At that moment my curiosity was awakened to know whether I had not one of these aerial attendants about my head; and, looking round, I saw behind me a vast figure of terrific form and aspect, whom I could not for a moment mistake for his infernal majesty. He has been so often described that I suspect I should add nothing new. I will only say, that his glowing and protruded eyeballs evinced an ardour and pene-

tration of vision, not very pleasant to look at, or easy to scrutinize: and his whole form reminded me of "the sun eclipsed," or "archangel ruined."

My astonishment was increased when I perceived in his hand a little book, which I immediately knew to be the TRIANGLE: with a stern voice, and a frown which seemed to insphere him in darkness, he demanded whether I was the author of that book. "Great Lucifer," said I, "if your knowledge is as great as is generally imagined, you surely must know who wrote it." "Yes," says he, "I well know that you wrote it, and I am now come to take vengeance." There is a vulgar notion prevailing that no living person can speak to a spirit; but as this vision came up through the "ivory gate," the reader will not be surprised at this dialogue. I asked him what fault he found with that book. "Fault," said he, "it is an audacious attack on some of my best friends; and you have outdone the devil himself in lies and slander." "Very well," I replied, "if you will show me a falsehood, in all that book, you may take me where you please."

I had often, in the course of my life, raised a query, in my own mind, whether the devil could read: being strongly persuaded, that, like many of his followers, he had condemned books which he had never read; and assured that to prevent people from reading was one of his devices; though somewhat afraid of incensing him, I made bold, however, to ask him if he could read. "You shall soon know," replied he, "whether I can read." With that he turned to the 23d page; "There, you say that a rat's tail was never measured: which is false; the zoologists have measured it a hundred times, for they measure all animals, even the legs of a grasshopper. You have told, sir, as great a lie as Goldsmith did, when he said that the horned cattle of America shed their horns every year; or as ——— did, when he said that the ants in South America would carry off every vestige of large villages of houses in three years."

I told him, however, that I did not mean to assert that a rat's tail was absolutely never measured, but that Hopkins and Calvin never measured it. "Hah," replied he, very quick, "How

do you know that Hopkins and Calvin never did it? And how dare you assert what you do not know? Hopkins and Calvin did things of less importance than measuring rats' tails, and as for you, you cannot say that they did not spend half their time in that business." "But, sir," said I, for we now began to grow somewhat polite, "if that book is full of lies, do you not like it the better for that, for it is said that you are the father of lies?"—"Come, come," said he, "those that wish to please me must tell lies about my enemies, not my friends; at any rate, they must lie to suit my purposes. I don't, indeed, care about abstract and metaphysical truth; that I confess I hate as most of my best friends do—but truth or falsehood which suits my interest, I approve of. For, sir, you must know that I am a selfish being." I was going to tell him that I presumed I had now discovered the true cause of his resentment towards that book; but he sternly interrupted me, "Come along, you are convicted;" and I believe he would have laid hands upon me had he not been prevented by another phenomenon.

At that moment the ground shook, and a superior light, that cast no shadow, seemed breaking on the heavens. A cloud appeared on the northern hemisphere, whose arching sides and silvered edges gradually rose to a summit, on which sat a personage, which every eye, as by intuition, perceived to be immortal Truth.

Her throne seemed ivory, and over her white robes floated an azure mantle besprinkled with drops of heavenly lustre. On her head was a chaplet of such flowers as spring in the regions of bliss; and the summit of the diadem was distinguished by a centre of rays that resembled the morning star. The bloom of eternal youth was in her countenance, but her majestic form can only be described in the language of that world where she is fully known. In her right hand was "the sword of the spirit," and at her side the symbols of power and majesty. Beneath her feet the clouds were condensed in awful darkness, and her chariot was borne along by the breath of the Almighty.

I saw no more of the demon or his genii, and while every eye beheld this glorious personage from afar, a gentle, but ma-

jestic voice, in slow and solemn accents, was borne to every beholder along the whispering breeze.

"Unhappy people! Truth alone conducts you to happiness: Her path is plain—her progress is pleasant—her end is glorious. Other guides obtrude upon you their services, but they impose on your credulity, and will betray your confidence. Ignorance was born blind: Prejudice has put out her own eyes: Error speaks but to deceive, and allures but to destroy: Ambition seeks you as her prey: Tradition is importunate without reason: Pride is the sister of Folly, and without goodness, and always carries about with her the weapon on which she will one day fall: and Selfishness, with facinating smile, presents you with her bowl of deadly poison. Too long have you followed these fallacious guides. I am TRUTH:—It is my province to conduct you in the path of life, to the bosom of the God of truth and love." She ceased, and while thousands yet listened for something more, her softened close seemed to die away in a distant strain of heavenly music.

But for my triangular bed, this delightful dream might have continued, but here the antipodes of my bedfellow gave me so violent a shock that I awoke, and behold it was a dream! But having now got back to the first floor of my dream, it appeared that I had been waked at a very critical moment; for I heard a great uproar and running about the house below, and somebody broke into our chamber, and, in great haste, told us that the house was all on fire, which the bursting of smoke and flame into our chamber but too well confirmed. We sprung out of bed, and hastened down stairs, where we learned that the landlord, who always slept in the apex, or upper angle of his house, because he loved a lofty situation, was *hemmed in* by the flames, and likely to perish. How it proved I cannot say, for here the cry of fire and ringing of bells, in the city, awaked me in good earnest.

I have heard it remarked by an old observer, that the first thought which strikes the mind after waking, is generally the best clue to the interpretation of a dream. Whether the first of these dreams is allegorical, I leave it for the reader to judge; and whether the second is prophetic, events will declare.

INVESTIGATOR.

No. IV.

WHY is the word of God called "*the sword of the Spirit?*" There is great force, appropriateness, and beauty in this metaphor. In ancient warfare, the sword was the principal weapon; was of such use and importance, that it is often put for the whole offensive armour; and persons slain in war, are said to be slain of the sword. The scriptures speak of *pestilence*, *sword*, and *famine*, as the three great scourges of men. The sword of the Spirit is that weapon in the hand of God by which his enemies are subdued. and brought to bow to the sceptre of his grace. "The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword."

The object of this number is a solemn appeal to all who shall read it:—to the friends and the enemies of truth, to the people of this country at large, to this city, and to the men in this city with whom this controversy principally lies. I appeal to their consciences before God, and I ask them, what general strain of preaching—what scheme of doctrine, in our own country, has had most influence in promoting the great work of reformation—in turning many to righteousness? What strain of doctrine has had the happiest influence in turning mankind from their vices, and causing them to assume the profession, and exhibit the evidences, of religion, in their life and conversation? Under what strain of preaching, and through what parts of the union do Sabbath-breaking, intemperance, profanity, debauchery, and gambling, least prevail?

Alas! this will be read by many, probably, with a careless reflection about provincial prejudices. But the truth cannot be altered. And the truth is, that what is here usually intended by *the New-England strain of doctrine*, including divine sovereignty, general atonement, moral inability, a probationary state, the invitation of the gospel to all men, and their collateral points, have been the doctrines in this country which have been attended with revivals of religion, and great reformations,

among all ranks of people. Wherever these doctrines have been faithfully preached these salutary effects have followed.

On the contrary, show me the city, the town, the village, the tract of country, where these doctrines have not been preached, but where they have been opposed, beat down, ridiculed, and cast out, as many in this city endeavour to do by them, and I will show you a place where religion is little thought of, where the sword of the Spirit has lain dormant, where the work of God has rarely, if ever, been carried on. God is a sovereign, and surely is not limited to any certain course of means; yet, ordinarily, where the proper means are used, the desired effects will follow. From the days of Edwards till this time, in those parts of this country where these doctrines have been preached, there have been frequent reformations—extending often through the towns of a county; sometimes for an hundred miles in extent; sometimes, indeed, limited to a town or neighbourhood. At the present moment, indeed, for several years past, and almost without intermission, large districts have been favoured with what, from their fruits and effects, we are authorized to call outpourings of the Spirit of God.

And, I ask, for I will not be deterred by a false delicacy, or by the fear of what prejudice or malevolence may say; I ask, what is, and has been, the religious state of those parts of our country where these doctrines have never been heard? Though, indeed, as I said in a former number, these doctrines have been disseminated, more or less, though in some places but transiently, in every part of the union; and I repeat, that, in every part of the union, they have been, more or less, favoured with tokens of divine approbation.

With regard to these revivals of religion, I am aware that various opinions are entertained. I am by no means about to deny that some persons, who, on these occasions, espouse and profess religion, do not continue afterwards to give evidence of sincerity; yet, every man is awfully concerned to see to it, that in speaking against these revivals, he does not speak against the work of the Spirit of God, and thereby blaspheme the Holy Ghost.

If these revivals are not attended with indications and

fruits, which every Christian will allow must attend religion, let them be dishonoured with the name of delusion: for instance, they are usually accompanied with seriousness, anxiety, and alarm. But is this an evidence of delusion? When a man becomes convinced that he is a sinner, and exposed to eternal perdition thereby, is it unreasonable to suppose he will feel great alarm? Are his fears groundless? Rather, are not those who feel no anxiety, although exposed to God's eternal wrath, in a state of complete infatuation? Was ever delusion so great as that which reigns over the man that can despise, equally, both the favour and the wrath of God?

Religious awakenings are usually attended with seriousness; a desire to frequent places of public worship and instruction; and a total cessation of ordinary amusements, and even sometimes of business. But, are these signs of delusion? Would it not be happy for all men, if they would seek first the kingdom of God, with great importunity? Are not the hopes of heaven, and the fears of hell, when brought home to the mind, stronger motives of action than our ordinary amusements and pursuits? "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

If these reformations do not reform mankind, they certainly are not the work of God. If they do not cause the drunkard to become temperate, the thief and the cheat to become honest men, the debauched and the lascivious to become chaste, the swearer to become decent in his language, the immoral to become regular and exemplary; if they do not make the relations of life more endearing, by being sustained better, and the duties of life delightful, by a habitual performance of them, they have no claim to be of God. But, if they produce these effects, and actually make men better, more punctual in the discharge of the duties of the first and second table, they are not the work of the devil; but it is the work of the devil to censure and despise them, and bring them into disrepute. It is the work of the devil to laugh—no, devils cannot laugh when they see men concerned about their salvation.

Is it an extraordinary thing, that a discovery of the fulness and beauty of the Saviour, his willingness and power to save the

soul, should occasion sinners to rejoice? Who is there, that had but a feeble glimpse of the great plan of salvation, through Christ, who would not rejoice, even with joy unspeakable, and full of glory? It is surely no light thing to be redeemed from the curse of the law; "to be made free by the Son," and to become an heir of his glory, a subject of his blessed and eternal kingdom.

If those people who are concerned, and greatly alarmed for their eternal interests; who seem to forsake all other pursuits for those of religion; who rejoice in Christ, and break off their sins by righteousness, and their iniquities by turning to God: I say, if these are not the religious—if these are not Christians, who, and where are they? Are they those who go merrily on through life, without regrets for the past, or fears for the future; who are bewildered in the avocations of business, or fascinations of pleasure; who are not troubled with superstitious fears of hell, and feel no apprehension of divine displeasure; who neither trouble themselves, nor others, with obtrusive concerns of a future world? Are these the followers of Christ, "who are not conformed to the world, but are transformed by the renewing of their minds?"

Are the gay and thoughtless, whose hours are divided between routs and assemblies, entertainments and parties of pleasure; the proud and ambitious, whose stern and haughty eye is intensely fixed on the glittering summit of fame and power? Are these the followers of Christ, and shall they hear the high and solemn benediction, "Come, ye blessed of my Father?"

When a number of men associate together from motives of pride and ambition; build themselves a splendid house of worship, and endeavour to fill it, by artfully drawing to it members of other churches; alluring by intrigue, by whispers, and incantations, those abortions of slander, the still-born brood of falsehood, and all under the name of prosalytism—is this the church of Christ?

There are many who wish people to become religious in a more rational way, with less noise and disturbance than usually attend these reformations. Far be it from me to wish to exclude reason from the faith or practice of Christians: but, is it

unreasonable that a concern so vast as the soul's salvation, and, especially, so opposite to the general habits and tempers of mankind as religion, should become a public sentiment—should affect a whole society with a strong and simultaneous sensation; nay, should create a public passion? All great interests, all public concerns, have this effect, though they are far less important than religion. What is the effect, when a nation is agitated by the spirit of war? The enthusiasm descends even to children; the theme resounds in the songs of the milk-maid and shepherd—in the conversation of the peasant and plough-boy. What, if the inhabitants of an entire county, or province, were about to remove from one kingdom to another; a general sentiment would be awakened, and it would become the topic of public conversation and attention—of animation and ethusiasm.

Where great numbers embrace religion at one time, it is a true and real emigration, and one infinitely more important than a removal to India: "They are translated out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son." Is it wonderful, if it should excite strong and lively sensations? and would it not be more wonderful, if it should not incorporate with it the natural passions of the mind, and sometimes be marked with enthusiasm. Dr. Young says, "an undevout astronomer is mad:" but, it is easier to study astronomy without devotion, than it is to feel religion without passion.

We are not required to love our neighbour better than ourselves; but the great apostle of the gentiles declares, "if we are beside ourselves, it is for your sakes." If an apostle could be beside himself, could almost lose the command of his reason for others, surely it is not to be wondered at, nor faulted, if men are overwhelmed with fear, elevated with hope, enraptured with joy, in contemplation of the amazing destinies of their own souls.

I fear that these nice objections to religious revivals originate from wrong views of religion itself; they seem evidently to spring from a disgust at the sight of reat numbers seeking for salvation at once. They want people should keep still, and say nothing about their hopes or fears of futurity. They are not at all disgusted at the strong passions, and enthusiastic feelings.

often manifested at horse races, in theatres, at concerts of music, in assemblies where great events are celebrated, and in the field of battle. Man, it seems, may be impassioned about every thing but religion; there he must be cold as marble, unfeeling as clay, dull as lead. He must, by all means, have the forms of religion, and that with as much pomp, splendour, and ceremony as you please; but he must go through those forms with as little ardour, and as lifeless a monotony, as the moonlight shadows of the churchyard move over the congregation of the dead.

Whether the revivals of religion in this country have been productive of good, which, at least, would be evidence in their favour, I leave those who possess the means to judge for themselves; and, in the silent hour of calm reflection, they will judge justly. In the heat of controversy, and under the painful stimulus of contradiction, good men err in judgment by overlooking the evidence of facts; but when these casual clouds are past over, the sun breaks forth.

But, wherever reformations are discountenanced and spoken against by public teachers, they are seldom observed to take place; and, I call upon the reader of these numbers to look around him in this city, and mark in what congregation these appearances have occurred; for, while I mean to cast no reflections, I neither mean to flatter the vanity of men. The truth will bear its own weight, and will approve itself to every man's conscience before God.

The strain of preaching which, in the former series, I have styled triangular, because incessantly urging three grand points, which I consider as erroneous, as far as I have been able to observe, is rarely, if ever, attended with salutary effects: it does not carry conviction to the mind; men's understandings revolt from it. Tell men that they are condemned for a crime they never committed; that they will be punished for what they cannot do; or, that they will be doubly and aggravatedly condemned for not believing in a Saviour who never died for them, and they will feel no conviction. However they may force themselves into an involuntary assent, into an artificial, as I have already said, a kind of technical belief of such propositions,

there will be no conviction of the understanding; for there can be none. They may, indeed, say, and perhaps truly, "my teacher is a great divine, has studied these things, and surely ought to know; and I have nothing to do but to surrender my understanding to his opinions and doctrines." But, alas! the mind drawn up to this tension is like an elastic bow, which owes its figure to the cord which holds it; its strength is overpowered, but not its tendency.

Many of the doctrines of revelation are such, as human reason would never reach, unaided by divine light; but being revealed, there is no doctrine of revelation apparently absurd or repugnant to reason. The three grand points, however, which form the triangle, are not the only ones which, in their conviction on the mind, remind me of the bended bow: their notion of faith is inexplicable, and their idea of justification covered with mist. As for faith, it is not *opinion*, *assent*, *reason*, *knowledge*, nor *love*; it is nothing which properly belongs to human perceptions, nor exercises: I have sometimes heard them call it a divine principle, but never could learn what principle was, or wherein it consisted. If I have been able to learn what they mean by justification, it is, that a certain quantity of Christ's righteousness is taken and put into the Christian, on account of which he is justified. The scriptures teach us that Christ has atoned for sin, and the sinner is fully pardoned and freely justified, in consideration of what Christ has done to magnify the law of God: but the notion of a transfer of Christ's righteousness, so as to make it the righteousness of the sinner, is using words without ideas.

Opposition to the doctrines, which have almost uniformly marked the course of reformations in this country, and, in the hands of God, have been the cause of those reformations, can be regarded in other light than as a deadly aim at reformation itself. He who strikes at the cause, strikes with a bolder hand, and with higher aim, than he who strikes at the effect. He who proves that a reformation, so called, is but an excitement of natural passion, and that its subjects may apostatize from their profession, proves little; at least, but a local fact: but he who makes war on that strain of preaching and scheme

of doctrine, which has been followed by nearly all the revivals of religion in a nation, if he succeed, will not be troubled with apostacies, for he will see no reformations; he will have the pleasure, if it may be called a pleasure, of seeing people go carelessly on through life, with no troublesome anxieties about religion, or the life to come; he will tell them. from sabbath to sabbath, that "Christ died for none but the elect; that he died for them, because they were the elect; and that when he makes known to them their election, then they ought to love and obey him:" they will make their own improvement, "that all anxieties about salvation are useless and vain. Why should we borrow trouble, or anticipate evil? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. If he has died for us, he will make it known to us in time; if not, then we owe him no gratitude; and as we were all condemned in Adam, we have nothing on our own account to regret."

That people will quiet their consciences, and repose calmly, and sleep soundly on this triangular bed, is as sure as that the sun rises and sets. This triple, nay, quadruple thraldom, in which their own voluntary agency is in no way implicated, soothes their slumber, and not a little gratifies their pride; still more so does the soporific dose "descend into their bowels like water, and like oil into their bones," when a religion is held up before them which is no business of theirs; which gives them a happy passiveness, and is every whit, and in all respects, as distinct from their moral feelings and powers, as the state to which it offers a remedy is without their accountability or blame. As they had nothing to do in bringing themselves into sin; nothing to do in getting themselves out of it, so they are highly satisfied to learn, that they have nothing to do when fairly out of it. As for faith, which is the body of their religion, it is no exercise of theirs, and has no connexion with their moral exercises in its origin, nature, or object, for it is neither perception nor volition, knowledge nor love. They have no virtue, for there is no such thing; and, in fine, they seem to be allowed to have nothing on earth, properly to be called theirs, but a little selfishness.

Such a strain of preaching will scarcely be followed by a spirit of reformation. The process of conversion and of Christianizing under these tenets will, indeed, make little noise: a person goes to his minister, and tells him he has some thoughts about religion. The clergyman asks him, "Do you verily believe that all men are justly condemned for the sin of Adam?" "Yes." "Do you acknowledge yourself worthy of endless misery for what he did?" "Yes." "Do you believe yourself totally incapacitated to obey God, or do any thing which he requires?" "Yes." "And can you not love Christ, who has been so good as to die for you, and has done, and will do every thing for you, and will carry you to heaven, and make you eternally happy there?" "O yes, I should be very ungrateful not to love one who died for me, and will save me." "Very well! you have nothing to do but confirm yourself in these sentiments; you had better join the church; there is reason to believe you are one of the elect."

Let it not be understood that I here pretend to give all the words that pass between the catechist and his catechumen, but I give the great features, and the leading points. Enough more words are used; but as he is never made to feel the true blame of his condition, he never feels a proper repentance, neither can he have just conceptions of the nature or application of the remedy. These convictions are sufficiently silent for the most fastidious, and are followed by conversions to a selfish, opinionated, intolerant temper and character; even, sometimes, to that degree, that a candid observer is at a loss whether such a conversion is more the subject of felicitation than of regret. If not twofold more a child of hell, he is, at least, twofold more a child of prejudice, bigotry, and persecution.

If some men shall flutter and flounce remarkably in reading these remarks, let them see to it, lest they confirm the suspicion that they are the "wounded birds."

As this Number is an appeal to the eye of the public respecting the usefulness and importance of revivals of religion, I deplore that I am compelled to add, that the instances which have come under the inspection of this city, are mournfully few. Look into those large congregations whose fame has been

spread wide by the splendour of the great names of the men, who are "the angels of those churches." And, I ask those "angels" whether they would not rejoice to see one general reformation pervading all their assemblies, and spreading through the hundreds and thousands of their congregations? I am certain the angels of heaven would rejoice. Would they not be glad to see all their people roused at once, to secure the interests of their souls? Would they not rejoice to see the whole population of this capital moved, as by one spirit, to secure one grand object? Surely, such a moment would not be greater than the weight of the concern depending. A heathen monarch, of a much greater city than this, once rose up from his throne, and covered himself with sackcloth—was followed by his court and nobles, and by all the people; even food was interdicted in a solemn fast, for three days. This was done because God had declared that Nineveh should be destroyed. And is there no reason to believe that God's anger burns against this city? Has not the cry of its wickedness gone up to heaven? And would not a reformation that should visit every house, and forcibly seize every mind, be desirable? Would it not occasion joy in heaven? What, if all the immense crowds that move through the streets were suddenly and strongly impressed with the belief that they were infinitely vile in the sight of God; that they were hastening to the bar of judgment, and to an eternal world of retribution? What sudden alterations should we see! Would our streets resound by night with horrible oaths and execrations? Would hundreds of houses be crowded with scenes of drunkenness, debauchery, violence, and obscenity? Would our docks, and vessels, and lanes, and alleys, teem with wretched people in whom the last efforts of vice have left the semblance of humanity, but identified with every thing loathsome and detestable? Would even crowds of children be heard profanely vociferating the awful name of God in their common sports and pastimes? Alas! it is not considered that the interests and destinies of every one of these souls are as truly great as those of the first rank of people. The shadowy vale of death once past, and the soul discumbered of its adventitious advantages, there will appear little distinction between the prince and beggar.

But what would be the effect of such a reformation as this? Would it not be the theme of general conversation? What crowds would throng the churches? And would it be admirable, if, under the strong impulse of a general sensation, it should become what may be termed a public passion? Perhaps even business, for a while, might be, in a manner, suspended; and the ordinary, even the innocent, amusements and diversions of the city would be forgotten.

A gloomy scene! methinks I hear some one say; and yet, reader, every one of these gay people will soon see gloomier scenes than this. The hour of death, and the solemn audit before the throne of judgment, will be more gloomy and dreadful, and without reformation, there will be eternal gloom and horror. Nor yet would such a scene as this be attended with so much gloom and misery as now pervades the city. Ineffable joy and pleasure would fill every pious mind at the prospect of thousands of people forsaking wickedness and turning to God. Religion is not of a gloomy, melancholy nature, and the concern and anxiety attending reformations is caused, not by religion, but by a consciousness of the want of it.

Be it that such a reformation, in this city, would be attended with some instances of delusion—some indications of fanaticism: how much deeper is the delusion that now reigns over the great mass of people, while they neglect their eternal interests, and despise, and dishonour the God that made them. A stronger fanaticism hurries them onward towards eternal ruin than attends the religious enthusiast in the favour of his devotions. The stern and lofty front of wickedness everywhere displayed —everywhere menacing—everywhere daring and obtrusive, defies every thing short of almighty power. But before the spirit of God be sent "to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," it shall melt like wax—it shall vanish like smoke, "for strong is his hand, and high is his right hand."

Such an event could not take place but with a general and strong sensation. Any judge of human nature will perceive

that an irreligious—a wicked man, cannot suddenly pass from that to a religious state without great anxiety and alarm; without unusual agitation of mind. It is not merely to say, "I will now become religious," and the work is done: habits corroborated by time, and identified with nature, are not thus broken through. The allurements of wickedness are strong, and are known, from all experience, to be formidable. A drunkard does not lightly say, "I will from this day become temperate:" the profane blasphemer, "I will henceforth use no more profane language:" the dishonest, the dissipated, the covetous, the liar, "I will now alter my course." I mention these classes, as pre-eminently wicked, but every man, even with a much fairer exterior, in his train of feelings, in his heart and affections, is as truly irreligious as these classes.

Religious awakenings and fears are by no means delusion nor enthusiasm. They do but present truth and reality to the mind with their proper interest and influence. A man on his death bed is greatly alarmed, feels strong fears, and calls for advice and prayers. Even courts of justice and legislatures, when a man is condemned, and going to execution, appoint him religious instruction; send him a clergyman to prepare him—for what? For the very same event to which every soul in this city is hastening: to prepare him for death—for the solemn trial—for eternity! Who objects to the propriety of this humane regulation? Who dares not think it decorous, nay, awfully important, that a man on his death-bed should feel solemnity, anxiety, earnestness, fear—should pray, should ask prayers? His eternal state is now to be decided; he is now to stand that trial where there is no disguise; to hear that sentence from which lies no appeal.

But the thousands that swarm in this city are in that same state. They may, indeed, and some will, no doubt, live longer, and some perhaps not. Many of them will go as suddenly, far more unexpectedly, and the danger is that they will go without preparation. A dreadful infatuation reigns over mankind. The interests of the soul, its good estate, and salvation, are as much greater, more imperative, and grand, than any temporal concern,

as eternity is longer than time, as endless pains and pleasures are more important than those of a moment.

The truth is, if all the inhabitants of this city had but a correct idea of their state and prospects, they would universally feel that deep and trembling anxiety which a man feels on a death-bed, or a criminal under sentence of death. When compared with a vast and boundless futurity, every concern of life would shrink into nothing. They would feel as though the change was present; the next step and eternal scenes would open; life is past, and the dread tribunal is before them. Then, all must depend on the favour of the Almighty Judge. But have they done any thing to secure his favour or deprecate his wrath? No! The great body of them have equally neglected his favour and his wrath, have equally despised his anger and his love; have felt no regrets for sin; have never made a prayer; have seldom used the name of God put in a profane oath. And are such people fit for heaven? A glimpse of their condition would convince them that they were suited to no place but a region of sin and misery.

Then they would think of the Omniscient eye that sees them—the Almighty power that holds them. They would think what goodness had been answered with what ingratitude, what favour by what perverseness, what love with what hatred. It would occur to them that perhaps their crimes are already past forgiveness, and that divine displeasure may now be ready to cut them off. With such impressions they could for a moment entertain no resolution but that of devoting so late an hour to so important an exigence. I need not tell what they would do or say: every reflecting mind will for itself strike a general outline of the course they would take. It is the course generally pursued by persons who are the subjects of great awakenings. "Who," says Mr. Locke, "could come within the bare possibility of infinite misery" without fear and alarm? But if all the multitudes in this city, excepting the comparatively small number of truly pious, were convinced that they were not only "within the bare possibility" of endless misery, but were under sentence of the law of God, as well as hastening by their own voluntary course to that end; that it was not only possible, but

highly probable, that that would be their condition; nay, that there was no possibility of their escape but by deep repentance, and thorough reformation, but by the pardon and acceptance of God through Jesus Christ, they would feel and manifest the greatest alarm and amazement.

That this would be the case here, we may be assured from the experience of all christendom since the reformation; and, if possible, more from the experience of former years, and other countries. "There were great awakenings," says President Edwards, "in 1625, in the west of Scotland, when it was a common thing for people on hearing the word of God preached to be seized with great terror and alarm, and who became, afterwards, most solid and lively Christians." The same author informs of many in France that were so wonderfully affected with the preaching of the gospel, in the times of those famous divines, Farel and Viret, that, for a time, they could not follow their secular business. The same writer mentions similar accounts from Ireland and other places.

President Edwards also quotes a letter from his father, in which his father observes, that "it was a common thing, when the famous Mr. John Rogers was preaching, for some of his hearers even to cry out under the greatness of their alarm and terror. And by what I have heard," continues he, "I conclude it was usual for many that heard that very awakening and rousing preacher of God's word, to make a great cry in the congregation."

A religious attention, thus excited in great bodies of people, cannot be safely ascribed to any cause but the influence of the Spirit of God. The reasoning used by Christ himself, in answer to those who blasphemously ascribed his casting out devils to Beelzebub, the prince of devils, applies, at least, if not with equal force, to this case. He said, "if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; and how can his kingdom stand?" I do not say that when a village, a town, a city, or a district of people are religiously affected, that Satan is cast out; but I say that his influence is weakened and his kingdom totters. It presents an immediate check; as far as it extends to the exuberance of vice, to the enormity of visible wickedness. In all the stages of its progress and operation, it holds a favourable aspect

towards deep and permanent reformation. Experience will warrant the assertion, that in these general awakenings, by far the greater number of those who come forward in a public profession of religion, are found afterwards to adorn that profession, and to give evidence of its truth and sincerity. It is also known to be a fact, that the greater part of those who are the subjects of the awakening, are found eventually to give evidence of a real conversion to God.

Even those who admit regeneration to be a progressive work, and believe that the agency of the sinner is more or less concerned in it;—in whatever way men are turned from sin to holiness, and from the service of Satan to the service of God; every one who wishes to see the great work brought about in some manner or other, cannot but be glad to see a general attention to religious concerns. For if it does not take that form with which they are most pleased, it takes some form, and cannot but result in raising the standard of public morals, and in checking the torrent of vice which threatens to bear all before it, and which, in great cities, becomes rapid and resistless as a flood.

A reformation extending to every house in this city, would be the noblest sight the lover of humanity ever saw. Its indications would be strong and decisive. The reign of vice, which now regards no limit, but throws its malign influence within every enclosure, would on all sides be curtailed. The horrid clang of profaneness, the bloated features of dissipation, the haggard spectacle of prostitution, the inanity of vicious idleness, the menace of unbridled passion, deliberate revenge, curtained behind human features, and heard remote, sometimes like thunders in the bosom of darkness;—in fine, the conflicts of interest, the wiles of dishonesty, the deep-laid snares of covetousness, which now, at every step, arrest your attention, if not endanger your repose, would suddenly disappear.

What, if there were even a temporary suspension of business, a circumstance I have known to attend the progress of such a work? Would that be any evidence against it? Is this world of darkness and sin so vastly important that nothing for a moment must ever interrupt man's complete and universal servi-

tude to its toils and cares, till he plunges into eternity? Must a man be the subject of sarcasm and contempt, because in the first hours of his solicitude to secure eternal felicity, in the first days of his espousal to the adorable Redeemer, he has neglected worldly pursuits! Alas! those that bring this objection, I fear, have never been informed that "the love of money is the root of all evil;" have never considered, that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Christians belong to a kingdom which is not of this world; and shall they not sometimes make every thing give way to the interests, pleasures, and joys of that kingdom? Especially, whilst their interests in it are apparently insecure; whilst they are solicitously and painfully endeavouring to obtain "a name and a place" in that kingdom, shall they not consider this world's wealth and enjoyments as "loss, and dung, and dross?"

When were the people of this city known to relax their attention to business, under the powerful sway of religious impulse? Does devotion to God, and the solemn acts of worship, infringe on the days of the week; or do the schemes of amassing wealth, the delirium of incessant business, still fever their souls on the Sabbath, distract their attention, and palsy their devotions in the house of God, and surcharge their conversation in the intervals of worship? Nor yet does it all avail them: for in this perpetual and endless whirl of business, they resemble the conflict of thousands endeavouring to gain a slippery summit, where there is not room for hundreds to stand. When half way up the hill, they suddenly slide into the vale of poverty, and from thence sink to the grave.

The King of heaven himself is the dispenser of all the blessings of this life, as well as the life to come. He has said, "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed; but seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added unto you." Accordingly, it has been actually and repeatedly observed, that those towns and villages who, seemingly, neglect their business, in times of religious awakening, have been favoured with abundance and peculiar

prosperity in those seasons. There is, indeed, the promise of God to this effect; and I assert what is known to many.

While I figure to myself all the inhabitants of this city, devoutly and earnestly attending to the most important of all concerns, I cannot but consider in what a variety of respects this would be, by far, the happiest city on the globe. The great and sudden diminution of the number of the miserable victims of vice—of criminals which throng our courts, and crowd our prisons—of invalids which fill our hospitals—of paupers in our alms-houses and asylums—of helpless age, without provision—and infancy, without protection—of beggars patrolling the streets, whose story is, generally, but a veil to their faults; but, most of all, of that numerous banditti of thieves, robbers, swindlers, pilferers, incendiaries, burglars, and ruffians, whose concealment from the public eye alone prevents a general alarm.

The immense accumulation of human masses of the above description, in great cities, and which make incessant demands on the justice and vigilance, as well as the charity and liberality of society, become at length, like a putrid diathesis in the human body; or, to say the least, the perpetual recurrence of these loathsome objects is one of the pests and torments of great cities. Yet, the immortal souls of all these miserable people are of immense value; the reformation that should reach and recover them, would plant new stars in the firmament of glory. And how delightful the thought, that the light of truth should dispel the gloom from these dungeons, and, through such wide departments of pain and horror, should pour the healing balm of salvation.

Far above these Augean stables of sin and pain, and which no Herculian labour could cleanse, there is another department of vice in this city, but connected with the former by innumerable doors and headlong steps. This region appears brilliant and fair; its precincts resound with hilarity, feast, and song, and it contains thousands of the opulent, the fashionable, the young, and the gay. Vice is clad in splendour, and a spirit reigns here which knows no moral law but inclination, and recognises no god but pleasure. But one use is made here of Jehovah's awful name, and that is to give bravery and relish to

the idle clamour of folly—to embellish the fulminations of wit and mirth, and to give force and grandeur to the language of passion, rage, and falsehood. Is this the abode of happiness? Its chief characteristics are restless pride without gratification—ostentation without motive or reward—professions without sincerity—ceremony without comfort—laughter without joy—smiles which conceal rancour—approbation alloyed with envy, and vociferous praises dying away into the whispers of calumny.

> "Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
> The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare."

What changes a work of God's spirit would cause in this numerous class; and, O! how greatly to be desired, even for the purposes of present happiness! But do you think that these gay people, on whose countenances often dwells the smile of peace—whose every step appears light and airy as the radiant footstep of Aurora—whose very form and features are luminous with contentment and hope; do you imagine they live otherwise than in a continual round of unmingled enjoyment? How false is the estimate made of human happiness! These people are as mistaken in their pursuit of pleasure as others are in judging of their felicities from their exterior.

They are strangers to happiness; and I am in no fear of contradiction. No, the immortal mind is not thus made. The glitter of dress—the splendour of apartments—the loftiness of houses—the beauty of equipage, have all the potency of their charms from the supposed admiration they excite in the eyes of spectators; and even here their vain possessors are grossly mistaken; for more than half that admiration is the most unlovely envy. The brilliance of all these things strikes the eye, but carries no pleasure to the heart; the immortal spirit within well knows they are but dust; and, in the midst of these baubles, indignantly retires within itself, and refuses to be consoled with a portion no better than what falls to the fowls of heaven, and the beasts of the earth.

Religion is man's greatest good; it pays the most respect to his most important interests; brings the soul to the knowledge and possession of her proper enjoyments, and points her upward to her eternal inheritance. Without religion, the wealth of Crœsus cannot save a man from the deepest poverty; with it, the beggar Lazarus possesses boundless wealth, and shall be eternally blessed.

With this idea, the object before me becomes important, in no ordinary degree; and as I see crowds passing by my window, of all ages and conditions; their high destiny and immortal powers, of which they appear to be scarcely conscious, rises upon me in solemn prospect: I cannot but reflect where these persons, and all the multitude that I see move about these streets, will be after the mighty lapse of ten thousand ages. Stupidity may laugh, and infidelity sneer, at such a suggestion, but a heathen monarch wept at the thought that all his army, the greatest ever assembled, would die in a hundred years.* And a greater than a heathen monarch wept over a city, doubtless less guilty before God than this. Yes, after the full period of ten thousand ages has rolled away, not a soul now in this city shall be extinct, or, shall fail to make one of the number destined to eternal ages of happiness or misery.

I cannot but reflect how important these days are to the thousands I see about me, perfectly unconscious of their value, because thoughtless of the great purposes to be answered by them, and of the great work to be done in them. As it is with the whole of life itself, so it is with the business of every day; they have an ulterior relation to our eternal state. I am fully aware that the effusions of the holy spirit are not at the option of men: it is not in the power of man to cause a reformation in this city. But when I consider the boundless fulness of gospel provision, the explicit and earnest invitations of the gospel: when I know that God is long suffering, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance:" when I consider how this city has been distinguished by great and special blessings of providence; shielded in war, delivered from

* Xerxes the Great.

pestilence, prospered in peace, and rising to greatness, I cannot but advert to the stupidity and wickedness, which were never more visible and triumphant than at the present time, with alarm and foreboding. And let it be called prophesying, or by any other opprobrious name, God will not suffer such blessings to be answered by such ingratitude with long impunity. There will be changes, and the sword of divine displeasure, is, I fear, already drawn; in what way it will strike, or how it will fall, infinite wisdom only knows.

Be it that God's own work is in his own hands, and that he will carry it on when and where he pleases: Christians ought to know that God works by means, otherwise of what use is a gospel ministry? The Almighty and ever blessed God has promised to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him. But let any one, to whom a thought so improbable as a general reformation in this city, may occur, who may feel a desire for the salvation of this great people; let him look round him and ask, why it is that sinners are surrounded as with a wall so adamantine, so impenetrable, so impervious to conviction? Why are the impediments so numerous? Why is it so awfully improbable that we shall see a general reformation here? Why does it appear so discouraging, so hopeless, so morally impossible, as almost to paralyze the conception of desire, or the secret wrestlings and agonizings of prayer? There surely is a cause, nor is that cause invisible in its operation. Religion is everywhere the same. There is "balm in Gilead, and a physician there." God is no more hostile to cities than to villages: his spirit is as free, and his offers of salvation as full, to the people of a crowded city as of the open country. Nor are the people in cities more averse to religion than in the country.

Human nature is, indeed, much the same in all places; but if there is any difference, the people of large cities have more sensibility, are certainly more alive to the finer feelings, and to the impulse of public sensations, and are more quick and susceptible to sentimental impressions. They are naturally no more wicked, no more inaccessible to conviction, no more ardent in worldly pursuits, no more insensible to the solemn

themes of evangelical truth, or to the condition and prospects of the soul, than the inhabitants of the country at large.

The difference which sinks the scale of the city to a depth so hopeless, in this comparison, is owing, in a great measure, to a difference in the means used to promote religion; in short, to a difference in what is denominated the means of grace.

If the reader will recur to the first numbers of the Triangle, first series, he will there find stated the cause to which I here allude. The strain of doctrine there described, and which has, in a measure, formed the current of opinion and tone of feeling in a very great body of people in this city, suffice it to say, has not been attended with Many indications of reformation, and has, to all appearance, presented no barrier to the overwhelming flood of vice which threatens the city.

It will be easy to contradict this assertion, but not easy to show that it is not true: "*cum res ipsa loquitur:*" and I shall dismiss this subject with expressing my firm belief, that these doctrines continuing to be disseminated, enforced, and maintained in the manner and form they have been, for years past, there will be no reformation. I have no expectation that God will honour them with that mark of his approbation; and as for the merit they claim, in point of moral suasion, or the prospect of any effect they will produce in that way, I should expect as much effect from the Arabian proverbs delivered in their native tongue. They are not the doctrines of the frequent and great reformations which have been in our days, and in our country. They are not "the sword of the Spirit."

The more these doctrines prevail and gain credit, the more men are contracted by selfishness, which always brings intolerance in its train: the more noise is made about depravity, and the greater the ostentation of setting human nature low, the more is the hearer and the convert flattered in his pride and quieted in his conscience, and made to sleep, by a potent antidote, against even the thunders of truth: the more that is made of faith, the less of personal holiness, and that true moral excellence, which gives religion its beauty and heaven its felicity. So that in leading the sinner to contemplate his own depravity, they furnish him with excuses instead of overwhelming him

with conviction; and in leading the Christian to consider the gracious promises of God, they puff him up with pride, and embolden him audaciously to demand salvation, and exhort him to "keep Christ to his word."

INVESTIGATOR.

No. V.

Among all the words which give offence to the advocates of the triangular scheme, the term Metaphysics stands foremost. They abhor it even more than they do morality, virtue, or even disinterestedness. This prejudice against some, and so many of the best words in our language, is not a mark in their favour: and especially when it is considered that their antipathy does not stop at the word itself, but goes far beyond, and aims at the very things these words are used for.

Concerning these offensive words I have said something in former numbers; but as somewhere on this ground, they have erected one of their strongest fortresses, from which they keep up a perpetual and running fire of random shot, I shall sit down before it in this number: nor do I expect to find it as impregnable as the den of Cacus. About the word *disinterested*, I think I have already discharged my duty. It is a term, and conveys an idea, well understood, in all our best writers. Addison and Johnson use it frequently in the same sense we use it. A man sees two men in a quarrel, and fiercely contending. He steps in between them, and says, "Gentlemen, I have no interest in the result of this contention; I am well disposed towards you both. Permit me, then, to act as a mediator between you." This man will be likely to have influence with both these men, because they perceive that he is entirely disinterested.

I therefore said that no word in our language was better understood, or more immoveably fixed in its true import. I have

not seen a more handsome illustration of this word than I lately read in Cox's life of Melancthon, where he sums up and finishes the character of that great man by observing, that he generally acted under the influence of a purely "disinterested benevolence." But some of our great divines would tell Cox a different story. Those men, who have eaten freely of the *Amor sui*, pretend that it is either a phrase of false import, or else of no import at all.

The word morality has not fared better. They have condemned all its family: for moral, moral agency, moral fitness, moral depravity, and the like, are all considered as Amalekites, and proscribed. Especially the phrase *moral virtue*, made up of two most offensive words, they regard as bad as the union of Herod and Pilate. The word *moral* we derive from the Latin *moralis*, which is from *mos*, a law or custom. Morality is conformity to law, and used in this sense. But has the Christian no morality? Alas! some professing Christians have not much. But what did Christ say? "Think not that I come to destroy the law," &c. He goes on to show, that he insisted on a purer morality than even the Pharisees, who make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but what is within?—Extortion and excess. The great command of the law is love: and says the eloquent Dr. South,* "Love is not so much an affection of the Christian, as it is the very soul of the Christian; he does not so much feel it, as he is in it."

Moral virtue is a conformity to the divine law, or in other words comformity to God. For as God is love, he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him. Perfect morality, therefore, is perfect love to God, by which I understand perfect moral virtue. This is also sometimes called charity; and as much as St. Paul insisted on faith, he had no diminutive opinion of it. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity."

But the principal object of this number is Metaphysics, a term against which an odium has been excited, and by means of which incalculable mischief has been done. Before I enter

* "An old divine."

on this subject I cannot but remark, that I consider this as one of the most extraordinary controversies ever carried on; not so much from its nature as from its means and methods. An attempt to carry measures by exciting strong prejudices against words, at the same time exaggerating and misrepresenting the notions pretended to be affixed to those words, and keeping the grand points of difference wholly out of sight: this course persisted in for years, and pursued with boldness and abundant success: I say, these circumstances render this controversy, perhaps, without a parallel.

The same things, however, which render this a singular controversy, render it not a hopeless controversy: for while I am perfectly assured that it results from misinformation, in very great numbers, I am assured, with a certainty nearly equal, that they want nothing but a right understanding of the case to come into, and adopt the truth. Whatever pride of character may do with a few men, with whom it may far outweigh the solemn dictates of conscience, the great body of the people have no motive, I might almost say, no *selfish* motive for preferring error to truth. And I am well assured that, at least, some may be convinced that their credulity has been imposed upon, and that they have been deceived. They may be convinced that error has held an ascendancy over truth, not by argument, but by efforts of influence from men riding on the shoulders of public confidence.

The case now to be mentioned is one of a most extraordinary nature. I appeal to the people of this city at large, that they have been led into the habit of believing that metaphysics have no connexion with religion:—that every thing metaphysical is improper and unbecoming the pulpit, or a gospel sermon: and that the Hopkinsians have little else but metaphysics in their sermons. They are very different from the good old woman I once heard of, who, hearing her minister, in whom she had great confidence, say something about metaphysics, replied, "O yes, I know that Christ is both *meet* and *physic* for the poor sinner." They do not, however, think quite so well about metaphysics as to think it is both meet and physic for

the sinner, although quite as much mistaken with regard to what metaphysics are.

1. "Metaphysics, or ontology," says Johnson, "is the science which treats of the affections of being in general." In strictness, the whole of truth may be said to be divided into physical and metaphysical; and to say the least, many of the doctrines of religion come properly and strictly within the department of metaphysics. The term affection, as used in the above definition, is taken in its larger sense, and in relation both to action and passion. "By the affections of being," says Dr. Watts, "are meant all powers, properties, accidents, relations, actions, passions, dispositions, internal qualities, external adjuncts, considerations, conditions, or circumstances whatsoever." (See vol. 5. p. 639.)

As it is one object of this number to do away the prejudice and opposition in many minds against metaphysics, by showing to those who have not the advantage of general reading what metaphysics truly are; and, as I have this moment before me the Belgic Encyclopedia, published in the year 1620, and dedicated to the lords of the Belgic League, and also Dr. Watts' System of Metaphysics, I think it will be useful to lay before the reader a compendious view of the subjects of which that science treats. If the reader will keep in mind that it is not Edwards nor Hopkins, and if he has not regularly studied metaphysics, I presume he will not think his labour lost in perusing this sketch.

Metaphysics, or ontology, treats of being, of essence, or nature; of mode and form; of existence, whether actual or possible, necessary or contingent, dependent or independent, whence arises the distinction between the being of God and of his creatures. In the next place, it considers duration, creation, and preservation; and, reader, is all this chaff and nonsense? It then considers unity and union; but what doctrines are involved here? It treats of act and power, of action and passiveness, of necessity and liberty, and of relative affections; but is all this nothing? This, reader, was the ground which the immortal Edwards cleared of as many dangerous errors as Hercules did the wilderness of monsters. It treats of truth, goodness,

and perfection; principles, causes, and effects; of subject and adjunct; of time, place, and ubiquity; of sameness, agreement, and difference; of number and order; of mental relations; of abstract notions, signs, words, and terms of art, &c.; of the chief kinds and divisions of being, as substance and mode, &c.; of natural, moral and artificial beings and ideas.

Metaphysics is the science of being, and there is not a doctrine of religion which relates to *being*, which is not, more or less, metaphysical. Man is a creature, finite, dependent, mutable, and ignorant; God is the creator, infinite, independent, immutable, and infinitely wise. Now, in all these, and in all other affections and relations, just and correct metaphysical notions are essentially important to a proper understanding of truth. An idea, or notion, or proposition, or argument, is called metaphysical, not from any *abstruseness* or *obscurity* belonging to it, but from its natural arrangement with a great class or order of truths.

Nor has it been a little conducive to the progress and state of knowledge in modern times, that classification, or, as it may be called, generalization, has made such advances; and it was this that suggested to the great Leibnitz the idea, that a universal language was attainable, and would one day be discovered.

Having given a general outline of the proper subjects of metaphysics, I have, under this particular, only to observe, that the want of correct views of metaphysical subjects is one source of the wretched darkness in that theological system which I have styled triangular. As I have said in former numbers, the divines advocating that system are essentially wanting in their knowledge of the powers, affections, and relations of rational beings. And, if we can admit their honesty and integrity, we have only to conclude that their contemptuous slangs at metaphysics, and the still more wretched work they make when they exhibit a specimen of their own metaphysics, must arise from their profound ignorance of that most important science.

2. The infinitely wise and holy spirit of inspiration, by whom the sacred scriptures were dedicated and inspired, having furnished the proper means, has left man to the use of his own faculties in his discovery of natural knowledge; deeming it altogether unimportant to arrange and classify, to distinguish and name, the different departments of science, as mathematics, astronomy, metaphysics. Yet the science of metaphysics, at least, above all others, is abundantly grounded on the scriptures. The grand and leading truths on which that science rests, are not the mere assertions of Edwards, or Locke, or Malbranche, or Stewart, or Bacon, they are laid down in the word of God, either by facts or inductions.

"Metaphysics, or ontology, is the science of being, regarding it in reference to all its powers, properties, accidents, relations, actions, passions, dispositions, qualities, conditions, and circumstances." Beings, are God and his creatures. Now, I hope that our learned adversaries will be willing to admit that the Bible teaches something concerning God and his creatures; and, beginning with the first of all propositions, that being exists, which, I think, the Bible proves, there is not a power, property or accident, a relation, action, passion, a diposition, consideration, or condition of any being, which does not afford an article of metaphysical truth and knowledge.

Reserving the consideration of this subject to a future occasion, when I can bestow on it that time and attention which are due to its vast importance, I shall here only observe, that a great part of the truths laid down in the scriptures, are metaphysical truths; and the grandest arguments there found, come under the science of ontology. I instance the deputation between Job and his three friends; the argument and expostulations of Ezekiel; the reasonings of St. Paul, and even of Christ himself. That love is an affection of rational being, is a metaphysical proposition: that God loves his kingdom, and that perfect moral virtue consists in the love of being, are equally so. That men are under obligation to love God supremely, and their neighbours as themselves, are propositions purely metaphysical. In short, the grandest of all propositions, viz., that God is love, is, in the highest sense, a purely metaphysical proposition: and the arguments by which all these propositions are maintained, and, in fact, all abstract terms and ideas, belong to the same class or order.

That I may not be misunderstood, and to save the objector

a little breath, let me further observe, I am fully aware of the difference between the consideration of the affections of being regarded abstractly and in themselves, or in their concrete form when considered in conduct and character. In this latter state they give rise to minor distinctions. Thus says Dr. Watts, "when they relate to kings, subjects, laws, rebellions, allegiance, treason, &c., they are called political; when they relate to God, holiness, christianity, repentance, gospel, and salvation, they are denominated theological;" but they still belong to the far more comprehensive class, metaphysical.

A discourse or discusion on the affections of beings, considered abstractly, in which their nature, principles, operations, and laws, are professedly set forth, may be styled a discourse on metaphysics, or ontology; but a religious essay, or sermon, or body of divinity, in which metaphysical truths and reasonings are employed, is, nevertheless, denominated theology. But what havock a theologian will make, who has no correct knowledge of metaphysics, daily experience shows us; and two volumes of sermons, lately published in this city, would form an incomparable book of reference: of which I will hereafter give some specimens.

3. From the character of God, the nature of his government; from the character, duty, and obligations of men; from the commands, threatenings, and expostulations of scripture, and from similar sources found in sacred writ, may be deduced the opinions which the ablest and most judicious metaphyscians have advanced concerning the powers and faculties of the soul. Yet, as I said, the spirit of truth did not instruct men how to name and classify them, nor with what other sciences to give them a place. But, notwithstanding these advantages, numerous errors, and some of them the most dangerous and fatal, have ever infested the Christian church. Some of these errors arose during the apostolic age: they have been varing their form and influence, and maintained their ground through the German reformation.

To them, in a great measure, are owing much of the mysteeism and absurdity conveyed down from age to age, about original sin, which term Calvin himself acknowledges is not in the

scriptures, but was invented by Augustin. Some have denied the spirituality of the soul: others have asserted it to be a particle or emanation of the Deity, and, of course, incapable of moral stain, or final misery. Some have denied its immortality altogether; and others have supposed it to sleep in the grave with the body till the resurrection. Some have maintained, that all the souls of the human race were made at once, and are kept somewhere till bodies are ready to receive them: and others, that the souls of the human race are one of the inferior orders of œons, or angels that fell, who are thrown into a state of forgetfulness, and sent into bodies prepared for them, in order to a second probation; and it must be confessed that much of human conduct favours that idea.

To this mass of opinions concerning the soul, may be added, that some think that there is no such thing as freedom or moral agency among creatures; that they are all like so many machines, or automata, moved entirely by superior agency. Others, and they are not much more consistent, believe, that, since the fall, men are free to do wrong and not to do right. But Bible metaphysics teach, that sinful creatures are, in all respects, as free as holy ones. It is sufficient to render an action accountable, to know that it was voluntary. A holy creature loves to do right, as well as a sinful one does to do wrong. We hear none of this metaphysical jargon before courts of justice, when a man is convicted of a crime. We never hear it urged that he did it because he was not a moral agent to do right.

If the reader will turn back to the contrast of sentiment, at the commencement of the third number, he will perceive that the true origin of nearly all the difference, arises from false metaphysics. Nor do I think, that even the notion of limited atonement is altogether independent of that prolific source of error, as I shall hereafter show.

Nothing can be more alarming, nothing more ominous to the friends of truth, or more hostile to the great doctrines of the Gospel, than the efforts of many to banish metaphysics from theology, and render them disgusting. Artful and designing men know the efficacy of this practice. In the first place, they

infuse into the minds of the mass of people, that metaphysics are something odious and foreign to religion: that any thing metaphysical is not preaching Christ. They then go on to extend and deepen this prejudice. Any thing argumentative, any train of close reasoning, however demonstrative, however conducted in the strong light of intuitive evidence, it is no matter, they have but one sentence to pronounce, they can refute it all in a moment. They need only say, "Ah! this metaphysical reasoning is not the Gospel." And to the mind duly prepared by prejudice, and ignorant of the nature of metaphysics, it is all answered and refuted. There are books now in this city, there is Edwards on the Will, in which the grounds taken are as demonstrably and unanswerably maintained as any argument found in Euclid: and many of these anti-metaphysical declaimers, when in companies where they are ashamed to say otherwise, will freely own it: yet the same arguments which Edwards uses, when used by others, these same men, when in other companies, will refute in a moment—"Ah! it is all metaphysical jargon! It is not preaching Christ!" Thus they have found out a way in which they can easily confront the eloquence of Whitefield, or the argument of Warburton. They have only to say to their infatuated admirers, "It is too metaphysical; this is not the Gospel;" and the work is done.

But the worst evil, and that which will increase it in a geometrical ratio, is still untouched. This abhorrence and proscription of metaphysics, is spreading into a much wider circle. Young men, educated for the ministry, are carefully imbued in this *aqua turbida*, and they will soon cast up *mire* and *dirt* enough, in their sermons. Instead of reading Locke and Edwards, which, either with or without teaching, they will be made to abhor, they are kept for months or years poring over rusty folios of modern Latin, whose very style might either cause or cure a Tertian ague; and which, if put into an alembic, till all their crude notions and common places had passed over, would come out a moderate duodecimo of excellent matter.

From these lovely folios, they must next trudge through the Herculean labour of copying, perhaps, Dr. "Verbiage's" vapid,

manuscript lectures on moral philosophy, or something else, a task as useful as to set them to see how many times a day they could throw the same stick of wood out of the third story window; and, at any rate, it keeps them as clear of any correct notions of metaphysics: whether it keeps them as clear of error, is another question. When these young men come before the public, you will soon hear about "imputed guilt"—natural inability—moral agency *to do wrong*—limited atonement—permissive decrees—faith the sum of religion,* &c. &c.

4. I am perfectly aware of the task I encounter by taking this ground, and coming out in such plain language: I have counted the cost, and am prepared to meet the consequences. I have been long a spectator on this ground, and have marked, with undescribable emotions, the progress of this whole business; and it is not a hasty resolution that I have taken to lay it before the public. When I hear one with an easy, nay, careless slang, explode the truths of God, and the dictates of his everlasting gospel under the slur of metaphysics—when I hear metaphysics themselves branded as error or nonsense, by many who are grossly ignorant of what they are, and by others, who, if they are ignorant, are wilfully and criminally so—when I know they do it to answer a purpose so fatal in its nature and consequences, I cannot be silent.

But there is one point of view in which this subject has not been brought before the public, and with which I shall close this number, together with this series. These professed adversaries of metaphysics resort to them as often as Edwards, or Hopkins, or any of their admirers and followers do. And, perhaps it is owing to the wretched work they make with them that they are ashamed of the term, and wish to whelm it under disgrace and darkness. I shall give a few instances.

The public knows the uproar that is raised against the Hopkinsians, for holding that the divine agency was concerned in the origin of evil. But have these humble, modest, unassuming people, no ideas about that point? What says their STANDARD? their almost inspired assembly of divines, in their catechism?—

* See Romney's Sermons, vol. I. p. 69, at top.

their assembly of divines, on whose incomparable skill and profundity they lay such stress? "*The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, whereby, for his own glory, he foreordains whatsoever comes to pass.*" And the apostle Paul, no doubt, hears them out in this declaration; for he declares, that God "works all things after the counsels of his own will." Now, according to the assembly, sin was foreordained, for it has surely *come to pass*. "O, no, that is metaphysics!" Any reasonable mind may perceive, that nothing can destroy the connexion between the action of a creature, and the agency of an infinitely wise and powerful Creator, who made him, and constituted his powers and faculties. "O, no, that is metaphysics!" Admit that a creature acts freely, God ordained and decreed that he should act freely, and his acting one way no more frustrates the decree than his acting another. "O, no, that is metaphysics!" God's decree no more impairs the accountableness or moral quality of a sinful than a holy action. "O no, that is metaphysics!" The scripture declares that God decreed some wicked actions; and if so, why not all? "O, no, that is metaphysics!" Sin was either decreed, or it was not decreed. "O, no, that is metaphysics!" If it was decreed, and the divine agency noways concerned in bringing it to pass, then Paul was mistaken, for God does not work all things after the counsels of his own will, but, on the contrary, he works many things after the counsels of some other being. "O, no, that is too metaphysical!"

But let us see how they talk about this matter. They say, that sin was merely the fruit of the free agency of a creature. And so, I answer, is every other act of his, when his will is not inclined by superior power. But who is the author of that free agency? "O, that is metaphysics again!" But their metaphysics will fairly make out that neither the purposes, nor the agency of God, is at all concerned with the free actions of creatures, and will effectually overturn the doctrine of decrees and establish, not Arminianism, but some *ism* far beyond it: will not only destroy all true metaphysics, but contradict a multitude of passages of scripture.

Some have set up, and dwelt upon the idea, that it has been better, on the whole, for God's kingdom, that sin has taken

place. I mention this, however, not as any distinguishing sentiment of the Hopkinsians, but merely as an opinion which some of them have advanced. Against this, an outcry has been made, and a "strange horror" excited, because it is metaphysical. And, reader, I appeal to any man's understanding, whether this is not a reasonable, and almost a self evident supposition. If the assembly of divines are correct, and if God has "for his own glory foreordained whatsoever comes to pass," which is as metaphysical a proposition as ever was in print, then surely he foreordained sin, because he saw it would be for his glory.

And what have been the consequences of the existence of sin? I answer, the infinitely glorious work of redemption; the union of the divine and human natures; the most glorious manifestation of God to his moral kingdom, through Jesus Christ. This is metaphysical; but is it therefore incorrect?

Let us see by what kind of metaphysics this is refuted. A great Doctor comes forward and asserts, that it is not proper to say that the whole plan of divine administration is the best possible; for we do not know but that God might have made a different plan equally good, or perhaps better. If God is good, that goodness would lead him to prefer a good plan to a bad one; and equally so, to prefer a greater to a smaller degree of good: but if his goodness be equal to his power, and both are infinite, then the same goodness which would lead him to prefer a greater to a less degree of good, would lead him to prefer the greatest possible degree of good in his entire plan. As to alterations or differences, we are compelled to believe that the divine scheme, as it is, was preferred to all others, for such reasons as infinite wisdom approved. Our ignorance furnishes no more objection to saying that God's plan is the best possible than it is to our saying that it is a good plan. To say, therefore, that it would have been as well or better for God's kingdom, if sin had never taken place, is an impeachment of the wisdom and goodness of God.

What kind of metaphysics are brought against the doctrine of *moral inability?* Why, they say that a sinner is not a moral

agent to do right, but is one to do wrong. Some, indeed, deny the sinner's moral agency, together with his probationary state. I cannot here descend to a consideration of their arguments: but how remote from the general strain of divine truth revealed in God's word! how contrary to the testimony of our own experience and feelings! The word of God declares our actions to be free and accountable, and we feel and know that they are voluntary. All parts of the scriptures declare that God is waiting the repentance and return of the wicked, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The obvious motive of the cry that is raised against metaphysics, is to screen errors from the lash of truth, and from the resistless force of demonstrative argument: and if certain men have found themselves urged to dwell upon the argumentative strain, it has been owing to the obtrusive and importunate efforts of error to behold and extend the dominion of darkness. And it is rare that Satan has ever resorted to so subtile, so dangerous, or so successful an artifice. What method can be more convenient, or more summary, to close the ear of thousands against conviction, than to say this argument is metaphysical: ah! that book is nothing but metaphysics!

The prejudice that has been excited, with efforts protracted through a series of years, and cherished with such care and zeal: the prejudice of every man in this city against New-England sentiments, has been owing, in a great measure, to the ceaseless operation of this mischievous engine. The pepetual fire of Vesta was never watched with such sleepless eyes, nor nourished with such abundant fuel. And what harvest has grown up and ripened from this assiduous cultivation? Shall I say a harvest of errors! The mixtures of religion of any sort are hardly sufficient to include theological errors: there is inanity of sentiment; there is emptiness of mind; there is negation of thought; people are not instructed.

The New-England Sermons, Essays, and Tracts, which here are absolutely and roundly condemned, as metaphysical hair-splitting, are in fact able and unanswerable demonstrations of the most important truths of God's word; carried home to the

understanding and conscience by evidence; and as secure from refutation as the solid shores that bound the ocean are from the waves that break upon them. I cannot but think it inevitable, that the public eye will be struck with two volumes of *triangular* sermons lately exhibited in this city. I entreat the reader of sermon to lay them by the side of a book of the sermons of Edwards, or of Emmons, and have the patience to examine and compare. I trust the white paper and conspicuous print will not be admitted to have any weight in the comparison, and I have nothing more to ask, and nothing to fear. The reader cannot but perceive the gaunt sides, narrow figure and sharp corners of the triangle. No propitiation for the sins of the whole world will there meet his eye. The non-elect is indeed, in one place, insulted with the declaration that he will be punished for not believing that Christ died for him. (P. 109, vol. 1. 6th line from the top.) The beauty and glory of religion, as consisting in the whole train of lovely virtues and graces, beginning with supreme love to God, no where meets the eye, and captivates the heart. But, on the contrary, the reader is told that "the righteousness of faith is the radical principle of revealed religion, from Genesis to Revelation." (Vol. 1. p. 69, at top.) And I will here stop to tell him that there is one place, at least, where a more radical principle is mentioned. (1 Cor. xiii 13.) "Now abideth *faith*, hope, charity, but the greatest of these is charity."

The author himself seems aware of his triangular figure, when he observes, in his Preface, that there will be perceived "a recurrence of the same thoughts and often of the same manner of expression." This he accounts for by observing, that "Great and general principles are closely connected, and so incorporated with the results of these principles, that it is not possible for a person whose opinions on these principles and their results are definite and unwavering, to conceal or dissemble his views or feelings."

I had no thought of making remarks on style, but I must confess this sentence presents a heap of opinions, principles, and results, which reminds me of the gordian knot. Does he

mean to say that the great and general principles of religion and natural philosophy are connected, and incorporated with the results of the principles of mathematics, and that it is not possible for a person whose opinions on the principles of mathematics and their results are definite and unwavering, to conceal or dissemble his views or feelings about politics? All this might be understood, for his grand proposition is, that *great and general principles are closely connected:* which is of the highest kind of *universals* rendered so by the removal of all notes of particularity, as logicians tell us. But if great and general principles are connected, then the great and general principles of religion and natural philosophy are connected, and so are those of law and physic. But his second proposition is more extraordinary; for he says, that great and general principles are incorporated with the results of *these* principles: with a different *usque ad*, he seems here to mean certain principles he had in his eye, but leaves us to conjecture what; therefore, I substitute mathematics, and it will stand thus: "The great and general principles of religion and natural philosophy are connected and incorporated with the result of the principles of the mathematics." His third proposition is a consequence, viz. "Therefore, it is not possible for a person whose opinions on these principles and results are definite and unwavering to conceal or dissemble his views or feelings." But reader, does fixedness of opinion, concerning any principles and results, offer any apology for repetition, or render concealment or dissembling impossible?

The reader may repress his surprise that I dwell on this matter, for certainly, if Stephens, or Bentley, or Scaliger, might give a column on a word in Virgil, I may speculate a little on half a page of his preface, "quod, sine dubio, fuit elaboratum industria, et prefectum ingenio." And I shall make bold to offer this as a specimen of the metaphysics of these people. Now, reader, this whole argument is false. Its premises are not true, and, if they were, the conclusion does not follow: and, if it did, it does not answer the purpose intended by it. In the first place, "great and general principles are not necessarily, nor generally connected," for, if they are, the construction I

have given above is correct. They may be found in the same subject, but are perfectly distinct and independent. In the second place, they are not incorporated with the results of each other, nor with their own results These words, so connected, make a flourish, but mean nothing. But in the third place; If it be admitted that all general principles are connected, and their results, *vice versa*, incorporated together, (a most horrid idea!) and if also admitted, that a man is definite and unwavering in his opinion about them, that is no reason or apology for a repetition of the same thought, much less for not concealing or dissembling his opinions.

How much better would have been the author's apology for a perpetual recurrence of a few ideas, had he said, "The man who moves in a triangle has but three short lines to trace, and three corners to turn?" "O ye Corinthians, ye are straitened in your own bowels!"

INVESTIGATOR.

No. VI.

I HAVE before me the Pastoral Letter of the Synod of Philadelphia, dated Lancaster, September 20th, 1816, of which I give the first paragraph.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

"The Synod assembled in Lancaster, at the present time, consists of a greater number of members than have been convened at any meeting for many years; and from their free conversation on the state of religion, it appears, that all the Presbyteries are more than commonly alive to the importance of contending earnestly for the faith, once delivered to the saints, and of resisting the introduction of Arian, Socinian, Arminian, and Hopkinsian heresies; which are some of the means by which the enemy of souls would, if possible, deceive the very elect."

The third paragraph runs thus: "May the time never come, in which our ECCLESIASTICAL COURTS shall determine that Hopkinsianism and the doctrines of our confession of faith are the same thing; or that men are less exposed now, than in the days of the apostles, to the danger of perverting the right ways of the Lord."

People of the union, hear this, and feel what gratitude you owe to a good Providence, which shields your religious rights from the persecuting fury of bigotry and intolerance. The tocsin is now blown, and while Truth grasps her sword, and Charity veils her face, let Vigilance light her lamp, and stand at her threshold.

I had closed this series, and sent it to the press, but this extraordinary letter merits immediate consideration. Shall I dip my pen in ridicule, and expose this transaction in the mock robe it merits? Alas! this cloud of darkness throws every object under a shade too mournful to admit of using the livelier colours.

Do we, then, in the Pastoral Letter, hear the voice and the sentiments of the fathers of the church, the central section of the General Assembly—that august body reared by divine grace, in this free and happy country, and by the special blessing of God grown to a size so majestic, in a time so comparatively short? That Assembly, now spreading its branches to the east and west, to the north and to the south, with a prospect of a boundary that may still expand for ages?

Where are the great and benevolent founders of these Synods, and of this Assembly? Has the angel of heavenly love, and charity, and peace, together with them, taken her flight for ever? Ye spirits of Davies, and Witherspoon, and Finley, of Rodgers and M'Whorter, under whose mild and harmonizing influence this tree was planted, unless removed from all knowledge of its prospects and dangers—from all sympathy with this region of sin and death, can you behold a devouring flame kindled in its central boughs, and not feel a momentary thrill of anxiety?

I cannot but indulge in reflections like these, when I advert to the character, the temper, the spirit, the wisdom of the men, who, under God, were the founders of these religious institutions. I mention these men, not because they were the only

men concerned in that great and benevolent work; there were many others equally engaged, and perhaps some equally useful.

The reader will now perceive the justice of the remarks made in the former series, concerning the opposition made to the strain of doctrine called Hopkinsian. In this number I shall call his attention to a few remarks on this Pastoral Letter of the Synod of Philadelphia.

1. It is impossible not to perceive that Hopkinsianism is the grand error aimed at in that letter. They declare in the same letter that there never was but one Socinian Society within the bounds of the Synod, and it could not be thought necessary to send a circular letter to all the congregations in the Synod, and, in fact, to all the continent, on account of one Antitrinitarian Society. An act so official and formal, for a single congregation, and that, perhaps, a very small one, would scarcely appear decorous. As to Arianism, it is doubtful whether they have an individual of that heresy in all their bounds. They certainly have not a congregation of that order.

Nor did I ever know till now, nor was there ever a solitary instance, as I have heard, of any public body, in the United States, publishing a formal denunciation of Arminianism as heresy. The term Arminian is variously used and understood, and is applied to various shades of difference, from Arminius, the founder of the sect. Few, if any, of the protestant churches have chosen to censure Arminianism as a damnable heresy; and it has never been done, before the present instance, in this country.

The Philadelphia Synod seem to have forgotten that every large and respectable bodies of Christians, in our own country, such as the Episcopalians, Methodists, and several others, are usually denominated Arminians. All these they have condemned, in the severest and strongest terms, as heritics; have held them up to public odium and abhorrence. Whatever that Synod may think, I cannot but esteem them Christian churches comprising many members of great piety, and having many divines of distinguished eminence. It has pleased God to make the church of England, or the nation professing that faith, the grand barrier of the Protestant cause in Christendom

for ages past, and many of their divines are among the brightest ornaments of the church of Christ; God forbid that I should call them, or think them, heretics.

2. Had this language been held in some anonymous publication; had it appeared in the writings of some individual, as his own private opinion; had it appeared in a public journal; had it been delivered in a sermon from the desk, the individual might have been thought over heated in his zeal, and carried beyond the bounds of his own cool reason. But what is it? In what form does it meet our eye? It is the act of a great number; the act of professed ministers of Christ and ambassadors of God; it is the act of an ecclesiastical court, the central Synod of the union; it is in the nature of a law, or rule, and set as a precedent for all other ecclesiastical courts, and for all future time.

3. It condemns, at one stroke, an immense body of Christians in New-England, where, it is well known, this strain of sentiment prevails almost universally, and that whole body, in its various sections, are amicably represented in the general assembly; and their representatives, from year to year, set on the same seats by the side of members of this Synod. Moreover, the assembly is also represented in the various conventions, or associations, of the New-England churches, whenever they assemble. But this would be a small consideration in comparison with another: Many ministers and churches, who actually belong to the general assembly, perhaps one third, *perhaps one half*, are full in this strain of doctrine, and are condemned as heretics by this pastoral letter.

4. The sentiments usually denominated Hopkinsian were never considered as heresy by the founders of the Presbyterian church in America, nor by the wisest and ablest divines who differed with them, in any subsequent period, in Europe or America. Nothing was ever further from their thoughts than any idea of making them at all a breaking point in church communion and fellowship. Candidates for the ministry were never impeded in their progress, or censured for holding them. Ordination, or licensure, was never refused to a man who professed them, nor was any bar laid in the way of his acceding to any vacant church which had given him a call. Names, sufficient to fill his papers, are now in my recollection of ministers and licentiates coming from New England, and settling within the bounds of the general assembly, who are full in these sentiments; and of ministers and licentiates going from the bounds of the general assembly, to settle in the congregational churches of New-England. No test, abjuration, or oath of purgation, has ever been imposed or taken in either case; nor dark suspicions or jealousies; no whisperings or calumnies resorted to in the general operation of these removals in this wide extent of country. The trustees of Princeton college did not start and shudder with horror at Jonathan Edwards when they called him to the high and honourable station of president, although the *heresies* of his sentiments had been long promulgated and known. But I shall not descend to names, otherwise I might introduce a list of great length and equal respectability, which might have cooled this fervid ebullition of ecclesiastical censure and proscription.

5. The measures taken by the Synod of Philadelphia are pregnant with mischief, misery, and ruin; and, all circumstances considered, I question whether the annals of the Christian church affords a greater instance of rashness, imprudence, impolicy, or injustice. Do they, indeed, imagine that this watchword will be taken from them, and that all the Synods in this connection will ring with this dreadful denunciation, "HERESY, *and the means by which, if it were possible, the enemy of souls would deceive the very elect?*" What are we to expect next, provided this Synod act in character with their sentence and injunction? What is the rule of the everlasting gospel? "A heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject." What is to be the regular operation of this business, provided all who differ from Hopkinsianism shall condemn it as heresy? Individual members are to be hurled out of churches; churches are to be rent with disputes and divisions, and some of them severed from Presbyteries; Presbyteries are to be turned out of Synods, and Synods divided; and by this time, what becomes of the Assembly itself? Its full orb will wane, and present a fading and sickly crescent; "will become a proverb and by-word, a reproach and astonishment" to all mankind.

And what impression will this measure make on the public mind? How will it appear to this young and rising nation, whose struggles for her own independence and freedom are not yet forgotten? How will it strike at the feelings of the great and highly respectable fraternity of the Episcopal Institution, who are carelessly anathematized as heretics, merely for a handsome pretext to lengthen out the rod over their shoulders to reach others? For it is not to be doubted that that form of speech, "Arians, Socinians, Arminians," &c., was resorted to merely to make the bundle of heretics as huge as possible, that, by a kind of indiscrimination, the censure, the single censure on the heads of the Hopkinsians might not seem solitary and partial; in short, that it might appear one sweeping stroke at all heresy.

But I asked, in a former paragraph, whether we were to understand this as the voice and sentiment of the fathers and counsellors of the Presbyterian church. I rejoice to say, for the honour of my country, and for the religion I profess, that nothing is farther from it. I recognise, in this act, the features of some fierce and furious spirits, who, in an inauspicious hour of darkness and incaution, gained so much the ascendant in that body as to procure this abortion of a *Bull*, who has faintly roared once, and never will be heard again. I have no doubt that its authors, ere this, do, even in their closets, shudder before the bar of public sentiment; that they, severally and individually, wish that, at that moment, they had been a day's journey from that Synod, and employed in a manner, if it would not promote, that would not endanger the prosperity and existence of the church.

INVESTIGATOR.

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